

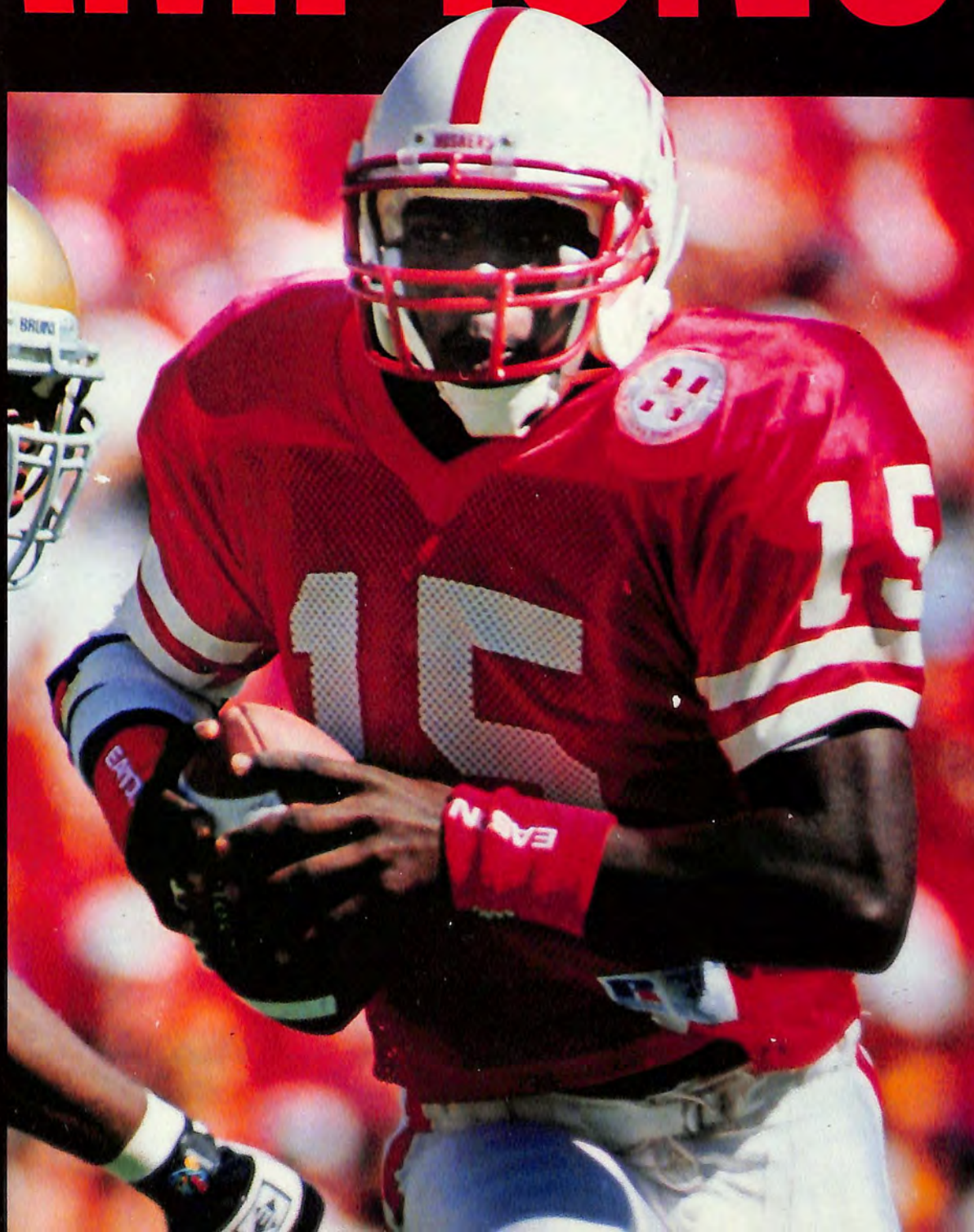
1994 NEBRASKA

# CHAMPIONS



**The complete story of the Nebraska Cornhuskers' 1994 national championship as reported game by game, story by story, and picture by picture by the sports staff and photographers of The Omaha World-Herald.**

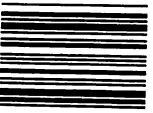
Omaha World-Herald



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Defensive tackle Terry Connealy shows off the spoils of victory from the Orange Bowl. "We're back on top, where we belong," he said at a Jan. 2 pep rally for the team. "This is something we wanted for the whole state of Nebraska."





About 13,000 fans jammed into the Bob Devaney Sports Center for a pep rally welcoming the national champions home. Doors opened at noon, and the arena was filled 15 minutes later.





RICH JANDA

# Nebraska **CHAMPIONS**

By  
**Omaha World-Herald**  
OMAHA, NEBRASKA



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**Cover photo by JEFF BUNDY**

**Tommie Frazier, running the option against UCLA, earned high praise from opponents. "He is the kind of guy who just makes a whole football team totally different — a Michael Jordan kind of guy if you will," UCLA Coach Terry Donahue said. "I think he's phenomenal."**



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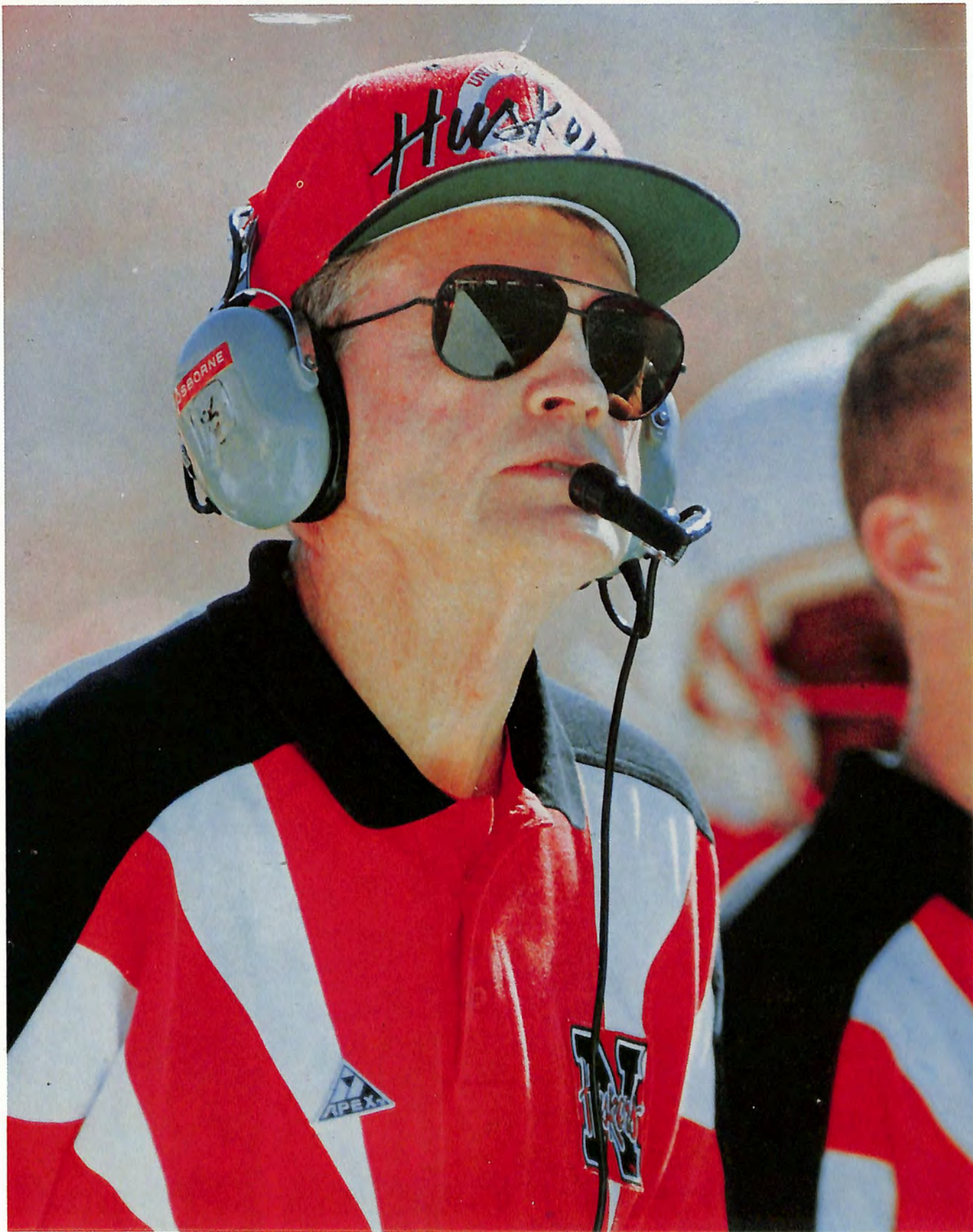
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JEFF BUNDY

Abdul Muhammad and Cory Schlesinger celebrate Schlesinger's first touchdown in the Orange Bowl.





JEFF BEIERMANN

"No matter what happened, our guys showed pretty good character, a good work ethic and a lot of determination. I'm proud to be associated with them."

—Tom Osborne  
Nebraska head coach



# PREFACE

This is one of those inspiring sports stories: the triumph of perseverance and the winning of a national championship which for 22 years had been denied. On three occasions since the Nebraska Cornhuskers posted back-to-back undefeated seasons in 1970 and 1971, Tom Osborne's teams played in the Orange Bowl with the possibility of winning the national championship. Each time they were frustrated. Playing Florida teams in Florida made two of the losses even more stinging. But Jan. 1, 1995, was different: Nebraska 24, Miami 17.

What a season! The drama of adversity, hard work, persistence, skill, perhaps a little luck, and, at last — the class of all college football. The Huskers are again the national champions.

The 1994 Orange Bowl loss to Florida State started the climb to the 1995 pinnacle. The Omaha World-Herald, read by more than 750,000 Nebraskans each Sunday, chronicled the drama of each victory.

Big Red coverage has long been high on our reader interest list and commands significant reporting resources. When Midlands fans seek the most thorough news coverage, they turn to the region's largest and best newspaper. And news they got: From the opening of fall camp until Jan. 2, more than 500 stories were printed about the Huskers' relentless pursuit of their "unfinished business." A sampling of the most memorable stories is included in this book.

*World-Herald* Sports Editor Steve Sinclair heads a cadre of more than 20 professionals. All made impor-

tant contributions, but three writers provided about 80 percent of our coverage. Lee Barfknecht, Nebraska's four-time sportswriter of the year, fellow Husker beat writer Eric Olson and award-winning columnist Tom Shatel treated fans each day to the unfolding of this drama.

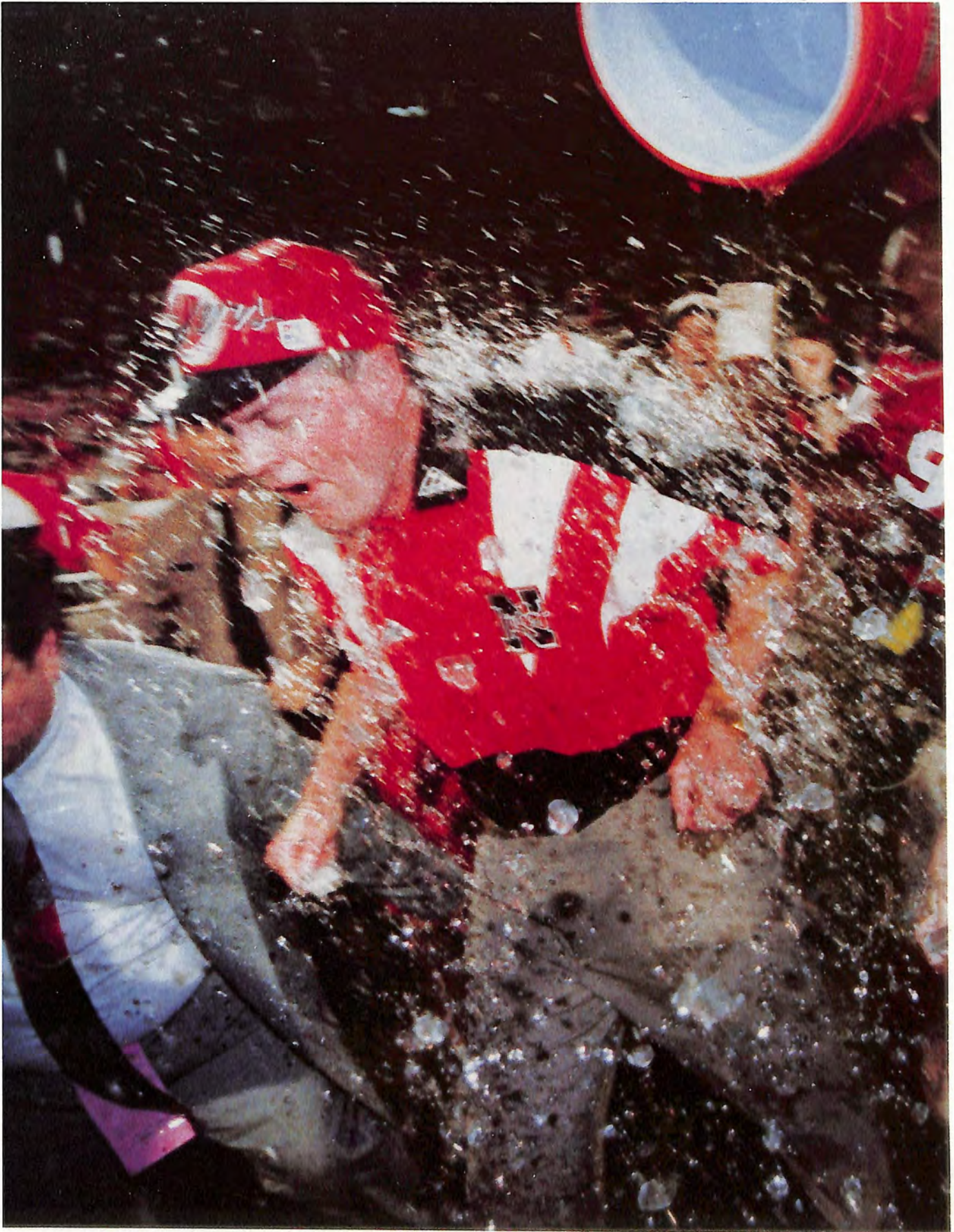
Teamed with a staff of talented photographers, they provided blanket coverage of the Huskers' blowout win over West Virginia in the Kickoff Classic, the romp past UCLA, the blood clots that sidelined quarterback Tommie Frazier, the rise to leadership by Brook Berringer, and a hard-fought win over Kansas State.

Big Red coverage helped the World-Herald set an all-time circulation record on Oct. 30 after the rout of Colorado. The Huskers marched on to give Osborne his 11th Big Eight crown, defeating longtime rival Oklahoma in Norman. The stage was set for what turned out to be the climactic Orange Bowl victory.

After allowing Miami a 10-point first-quarter lead in the Hurricanes' stadium, the Big Red maintained its confidence and persistence. All too soon it was the fourth quarter. Nebraska, trailing 17-9, was once again poised at destiny's door. But this time the door swung wide open. Victory! National champions!

This book relives these moments and others in the Huskers' memorable season. It tells the story of a classy coach, a never-say-die team and the nation's best fans. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we did reporting it.

—John Gottschalk  
*Publisher, Omaha World-Herald*  
Jan. 10, 1995



JEFF BUNDY

Tom Osborne gets a victory shower from defensive lineman Larry Townsend. "I'll always be proud of the way we played," he said.



NEBRASKA	24
MIAMI	17

J a n u a r y 1 , 1 9 9 5

# NU WORKS OVERTIME, FINISHES BUSINESS

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**W**ith its national championship-clinching victory over Miami in the FedEx Orange Bowl, the 1994 Nebraska football team successfully closed the books on its "unfinished business."

For the previous 364 days, Husker players had vowed to return to the Orange Bowl and make up for letting a national title slip away in an 18-16 loss last season to Florida State.

"I don't think I've ever been around a team that knew where it was going and what it wanted to do from Jan. 1 on," said Tom Osborne, who has been Nebraska's head coach for 22 years and a staff member for 33. "These guys were focused from the beginning on getting back down here and winning the game."

Coaches, players and staff members said that focus showed in winter conditioning, carried into a strong April of spring practice and never dropped off through a hot summer of running and weightlifting.

During June and July workouts at Memorial Stadium, the scoreboard was turned on to show "Nebraska 16, Florida State 15" with 1:16 left in the fourth quarter. That represented the Orange Bowl game circumstances after Byron Bennett's 27-yard field goal for Nebraska.

FSU rallied to win on Scott Bentley's 22-yard field goal with 21 seconds left, though not before NU moved into position for Bennett to try a 45-yard field goal on the final play that sailed wide left.

"The scoreboard thing," NU All-America tackle Zach Wiegert told the Big Eight Skywriters in August, "was to remind us of how close we were last year. Our goal is to be a good enough team so if we play that game again, no matter what happens or what kind of calls we get, we'll still win."

Osborne said he rarely heard the players mention the Florida State loss, but he could sense the determination that game had instilled.

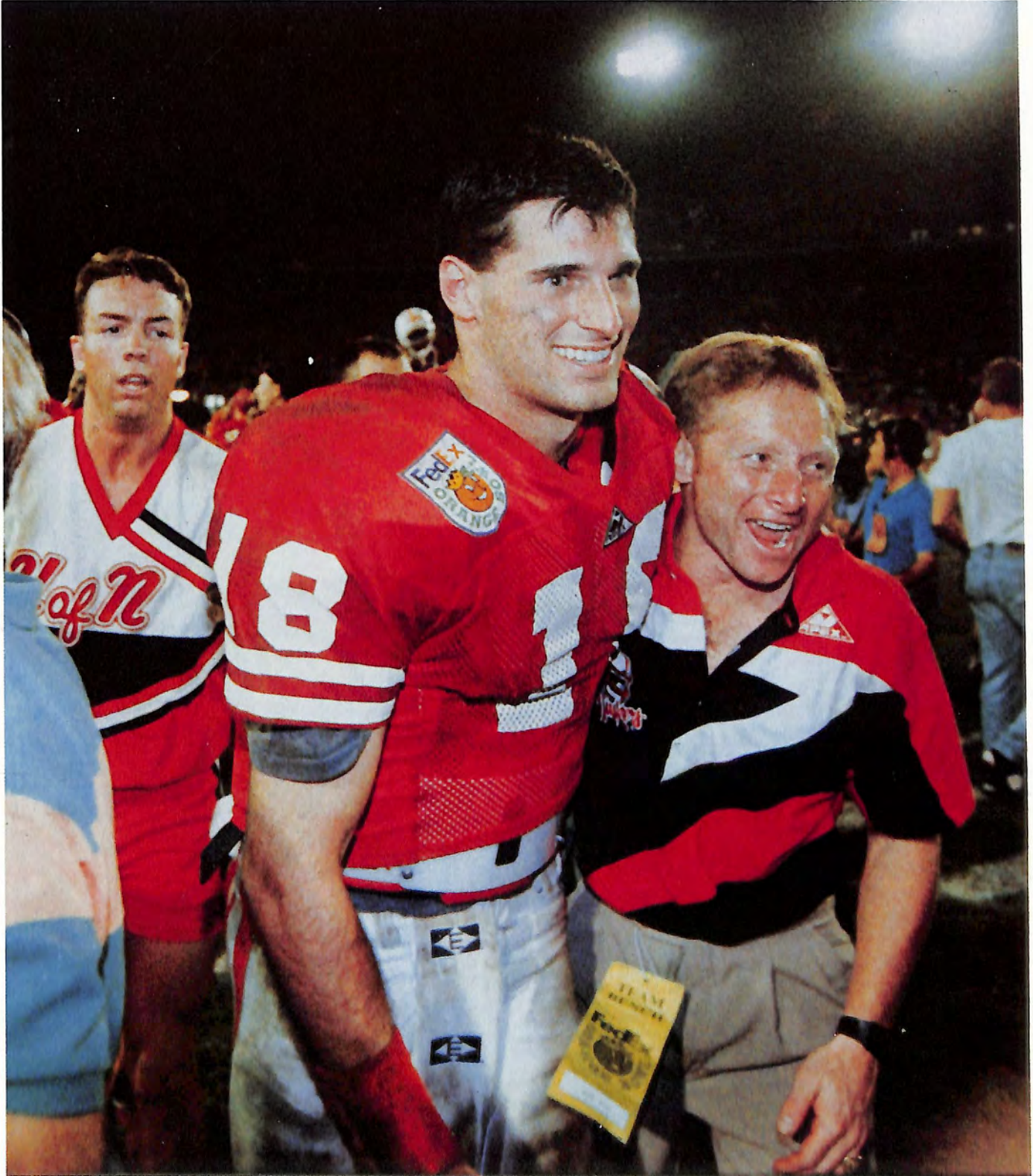
"Last year, our guys felt they had played well enough to win," he said. "They just didn't get the cigar. So they really worked."

"And once the season started, it didn't seem to make much difference who played quarterback or who was doing whatever. They pulled together."

The season started in the Kickoff Classic with a 31-0 thumping of West Virginia that wowed the national news media and helped the Huskers jump from preseason No. 3 and 4 in the two major polls to No. 1 in both on Sept. 4.

But in the next month, serious injuries hit Nebraska at the two positions that Osborne had said on Photo Day were the team's thinnest — quarterback and free safety.

At Texas Tech on Sept. 8, starting free safety Mike Minter suffered a season-ending knee ligament injury. The loss of the fastest Husker and a player the coaches called another coach on the field caused defensive



JEFF BUNDY

Brook Berringer and strength coach Bryan Bailey are all smiles after the victory. Competition for playing time with Tommie Frazier created "an emotional roller coaster," Berringer said. "Tommie and I played as well as we could under the circumstances."





JEFF BEIERMANN

**Tommie Frazier threw just five passes in the Orange Bowl, but one that didn't count in his statistics helped turn the game around: a completion to tight end Eric Alford for a two-point conversion that tied the score at 17.**

confusion for a month.

More trouble appeared on Sept. 25, the day after a 70-21 romp over Pacific. Starting quarterback Tommie Frazier was hospitalized with a blood clot in his right leg. When a clot re-formed Oct. 4 and surgery was performed Oct. 6 to tie off a vein, Frazier was expected to miss the season.

The quarterback worries were compounded Oct. 1 when new starter Brook Berringer suffered a partially collapsed lung in the first half of a win over Wyoming. Berringer continued to play, but his status was shaky for three weeks.

The shakiest game of all, Osborne said, was Oct. 15 at Kansas State, where the No. 11 and 16 Wildcats and an ABC television audience were looking for an upset.

With sophomore walk-on Matt Turman starting at quarterback, the Huskers junked 50 percent of their offense and relied on defense and I-back Lawrence Phillips' runs to survive 17-6.

Two weeks later came what was billed as the game of the year in the Big Eight between Nebraska and Colorado, both ranked No. 2 and 3. But it wasn't even the game of the day as NU bashed the Buffaloes 24-7 in front of the 200th straight home sellout crowd.

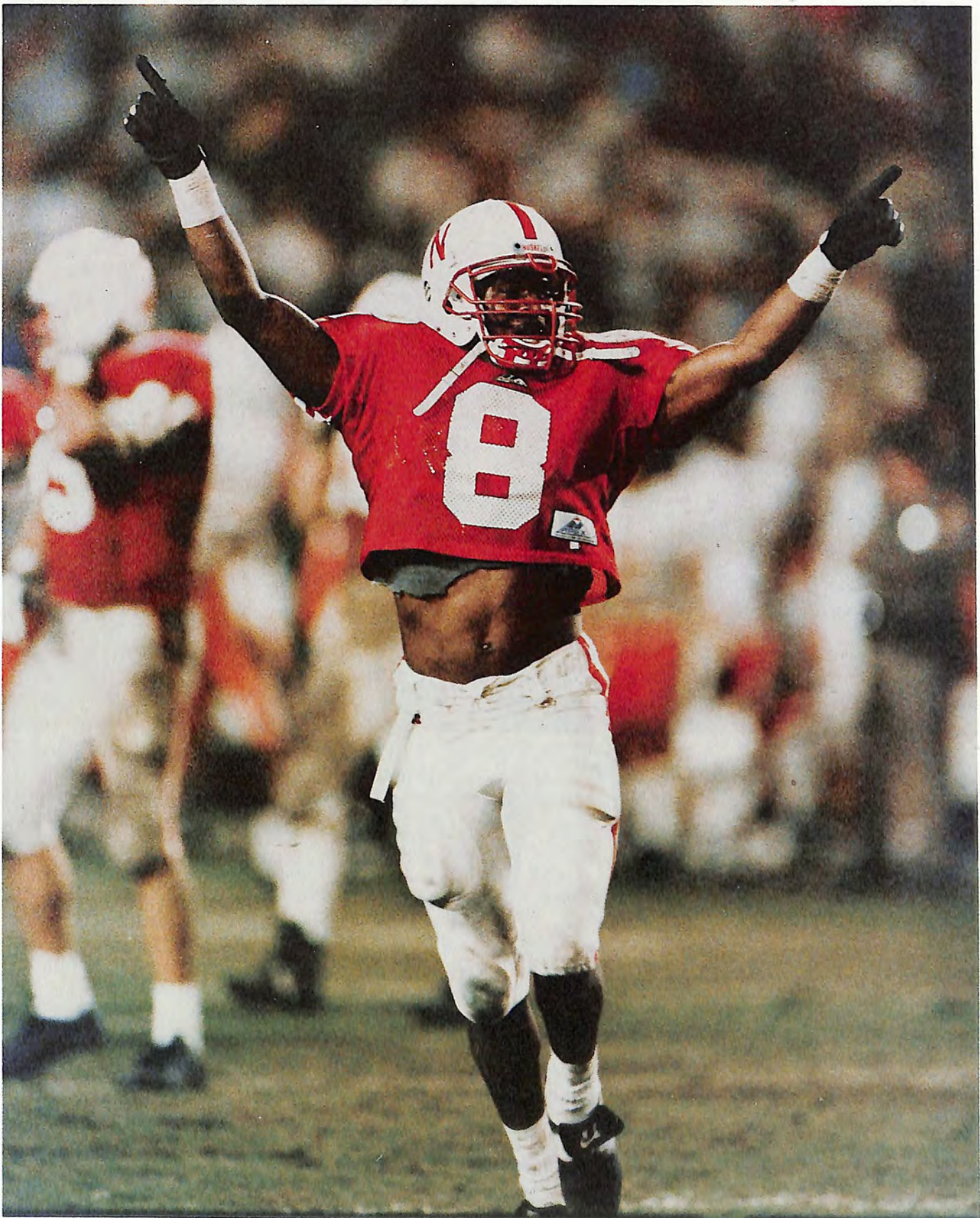
By Nov. 6, Nebraska was back to No. 1 in both polls and stayed there through the rest of the regular season.

Three Huskers earned first-team All-America honors — Wiegert, linebacker Ed Stewart and guard Brenden Stai. Wiegert won the Outland Trophy, and Stewart was a Butkus Award finalist. Phillips ran for 1,722 yards and broke Bobby Reynolds' 44-year-old school record for most consecutive 100-yard games to start a season with 11.

But Miami stood in the way of the Huskers' ultimate goal of a national title.

With Frazier back at full speed, he and Berringer guided the offense in the Orange Bowl to 24 points, while the Blackshirt defense — arguably the best in





JEFF BEIERMANN

Tyrone Williams rejoices after Kareem Moss' interception seals the victory. "I thought the defense played great football, particularly in the fourth quarter," NU Coach Tom Osborne said. "I don't think we could have won the game if the defense hadn't played well at that time."



MIAMI 10 0 7 0—17  
NEBRASKA 0 7 2 15—24

M—FG DANE PREWITT 44

M—TRENT JONES 35 PASS FROM FRANK COSTA (PREWITT KICK)

N—MARK GILMAN 19 PASS FROM BROOK BERRINGER (TOM SIELER KICK)

M—JONATHAN HARRIS 44 PASS FROM COSTA (PREWITT KICK)

N—SAFETY, COSTA TACKLED IN END ZONE BY DWAYNE HARRIS

N—CORY SCHLESINGER 15 RUN (ERIC ALFORD PASS FROM TOMMIE FRAZIER)

N—SCHLESINGER 14 RUN (SIELER KICK)

	NU	MIAMI
FIRST DOWNS	20	14
BY RUSHING	15	4
BY PASSING	4	10
BY PENALTY	1	0
RUSHES-YARDS	46-199	28-29
AVG. PER CARRY	4.3	1.0
COMP.-ATT.-INT.	11-20-2	18-35-1
PASSING YARDS	106	248
TOTAL YARDS	305	277
TOTAL PLAYS	66	63
AVG. PER PLAY	4.6	4.4
PUNT RETURNS-YARDS	4-17	2-(-6)
KICKOFF RETURNS-YARDS	5-88	2-40
INTERCEPTIONS-YARDS	1-0	2-0
FUMBLES-LOST	2-1	2-0
PENALTIES-YARDS	3-20	11-92
PUNTS-AVERAGE	7-41.1	7-39.7
SACKS BY-YARDS LOST	5-24	3-20
THIRD-DOWN CONVERSIONS	3-11	3-13
TIME OF POSSESSION	32:32	27:28
ATTENDANCE—81,753		

#### NEBRASKA OFFENSIVE STATISTICS

RUSHING—PHILLIPS 19-96, SCHLESINGER 6-48, FRAZIER 7-31, BENNING 3-18,

WASHINGTON 1-9, CHILDS 3-1, BERRINGER 7-MINUS 4.

PASSING—BERRINGER 8-15-1 81, FRAZIER 3-5-1 25.

RECEIVING—MUHAMMAD 4-60, PHILLIPS 4-13, GILMAN 1-19, HOLBEIN 1-7, BAUL 1-7.

PUNTING—ERSTAD 7-41.1

PUNT RETURNS—MOSS 4-4.3.

KICKOFF RETURNS—BENNING 5-17.6.

#### MIAMI OFFENSIVE STATISTICS

RUSHING—STEWART 17-72, HARRIS 1-6, L. JONES 1-2, FERGUSON 2-1, COSTA 6-MINUS 17, TEAM 1-MINUS 35.

PASSING—COSTA 18-35-1 248.

RECEIVING—C.T. JONES 6-63, GERMAN 3-22, TELLISON 2-53, WIMBERLY 2-18, HARRIS 1-44, T. JONES, 1-35, CHAMBERS 1-14, FERGUSON 1-3, GREEN 1-MINUS 4.

PUNTING—PREWITT 7-39.7.

FIELD GOALS—PREWITT 1-1.

PUNT RETURNS—GERMAN 2-MINUS 3.

KICKOFF RETURNS—SHIPMAN 2-20.

#### NEBRASKA DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

TACKLES (U-A-T)—MILES 9-0-9, VELAND 4-2-6, STEWART 3-2-5, ELIJS 3-2-5, COLMAN 3-1-4, D. JONES 1-3-4, HARRIS 4-0-4, CONNEALY 3-1-4, DUMAS 2-1-3, T. WILLIAMS 2-1-3, MOSS 2-1-3, WISTROM 2-1-3, DENNIS 1-0-1, BROWN 1-0-1, TONICH 0-1-1, TOWNSEND 0-1-1, J. WILLIAMS 0-1-1, HESSE 1-0-1.

TACKLE FOR LOSSES—HARRIS 3-11, CONNEALY 1-8, DUMAS 1-5, VELAND 1-4, MILES 1-4, BROWN 1-3, COLMAN 1-2, PESTERFIELD 1-1.

QUARTERBACK SACKS—HARRIS 3-11, CONNEALY 1-8, DUMAS 1-5.

PASSES BROKEN UP—MILES 3, BROWN 1.

INTERCEPTION-RETURN—MOSS 1-0.

#### MIAMI DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

TACKLES (U-A-T)—LEWIS 8-5-13, RICHARDSON 7-3-10, DAVIS 9-0-9, SAPP 5-1-6, HOLMES 4-1-5, WILSON 2-2-4, FRANCIS 4-0-4, PEARSON 3-0-3,

BURGESS 2-1-3, LANG 3-0-3, PHILLIP 2-0-2, LITTLE 2-0-2, SCOTT 1-0-1, PICKETT 1-0-1, TAYLOR 1-0-1, JOHNSON 1-0-1, MCCULLUM 0-1-1, MARLEY 1-0-1.

TACKLES FOR LOSSES—SAPP 4-21, LANG 2-4, LEWIS 1-3, HOLMES 1-1, LANG 1-1.

QUARTERBACK SACKS—SAPP 2-17, LANG 1-3.

PASSES INTERCEPTED—LITTLE 1-0, JONES 1-0.

FUMBLE RECOVERY—BURGESS 1.

school history — held the Hurricanes to minus-35 yards in the fourth quarter to give Nebraska a 24-17 victory.”

It’s a great way to close it out, to play Miami in Miami and finally beat them,” Osborne said. “We’ve had a terrible time with those folks.”

The win clinched Nebraska’s third national title in school history and the first under Osborne. The Huskers, voted No. 1 after the 1970 and 1971 seasons, lost bowl games after the 1981, 1983 and 1993 seasons that could have made them national champs. Osborne said the 13 victories won’t be what he remembers most about his players from 1994. It will be their will to win.

“No matter what happened,” he said, “our guys showed pretty good character, a good work ethic and a lot of determination. I’m proud to be associated with them.”



JEFF BUNDY

Brook Berringer combats the crowd noise by using hand signals to communicate with receivers. The Huskers chose to defend the Orange Bowl’s noisy enclosed end in the fourth quarter, allowing them to drive to the open end.





BILL BATSON

Terry Connealy and Donta Jones celebrate Connealy's sack of Frank Costa on Miami's final possession. In the fourth quarter, Costa completed 2 of 8 passes for 8 yards and was sacked three times.





*Tom Shatel...*

## NU EXORCISES BOWL GHOSTS

MIAMI—Joe Paterno was right. Coach Tom Osborne won his first national championship when he least expected it. And where he least expected it.

In the east end zone of the Orange Bowl.

The ghosts of the 1983 season, and the east end zone, were exorcised Sunday night. There, in the place where so many Nebraska national championship dreams have died, Nebraska beat Miami 24-17 to hand Osborne his first national championship in a storied and often-frustrating career.

The east end zone can vouch for the latter. There, where Turner Gill's pass to Jeff Smith Jan. 2, 1984, was

tipped against Miami, quarterback Tommie Frazier hit tight end Eric Alford with a 2-point conversion pass that tied Sunday night's game with the Hurricanes at 17 with 7:38 to play.

There, where Byron Bennett's long field goal try went wide left last year, Nebraska scored twice up the middle. There, where Florida State's William Floyd scored a controversial touchdown last year, Nebraska fullback Cory Schlesinger twice went in untouched.

Just like Nebraska at 13-0. The Cornhuskers will have to wait one day for the final verdict to come from both *The Associated Press* and *USA Today/CNN* polls.



JEFF BEIERMANN

Tommie Frazier, playing for the first time in more than three months, was named Nebraska's most valuable player. "This is a great end to a great story for me," he said. "I always believed I could come back."





JEFF BUNDY



JEFF BUNDY

Top: Cory Schlesinger tumbles into the end zone for the winning touchdown. "They were keying too hard on the quarterback and I-back and forgot about the fullback," he said, "and that's usually when the fullback pops it."

Bottom: Brook Berringer hit 8 of 15 passes for 81 yards, including a 19-yard touchdown pass to tight end Mark Gilman. "We thought Brook played pretty well," NU Coach Tom Osborne said.



But it will be easy, compared with the wait of 22 years for Osborne.

He overcame Miami in Miami. He overcame a 10-0 deficit in Miami. He overcame the Quarterback Shuffle. He overcame elephant tracks. Mostly, he overcame his own boneheaded call in the fourth quarter.

This was a gambling game for Osborne. He gambled by starting Frazier. He gambled by inserting Brook Berringer. He downright played with fire at the beginning of the fourth quarter when the Huskers got the break they had desperately needed.

Miami center Jeffrey Taylor snapped the ball over punter Dane Prewitt's head. As the ball bounced toward the east end zone, Prewitt ran back and kicked the ball out of the end zone and was penalized for an illegal kick. Nebraska got the ball at the Miami 4-yard line with 14:02 left.

And Osborne promptly had Berringer throw the ball. Huh?

Berringer's pass for Alford was intercepted.

The air immediately let out of the north stands, where the majority of Nebraska's fans sat stunned. You felt this was a turning point. You felt Nebraska had blown it. You felt Osborne had really outsmarted himself this time.

Did he want to win the national title, anyway? Or

maybe it was just the magnetic force of the east end zone, driving him away. Osborne quickly regrouped.

Our ramblin', gamblin' coach reached for the dice and gave them another roll. Maybe that's what Paterno, the Penn State coach, meant by "when you least expect it." Who could expect so much Osborne caution being tossed to the Biscayne breezes?

He put Frazier back into the game for the first time since Nebraska's second series. And suddenly it all changed.

Nebraska's options worked. Nebraska moved the ball. Nebraska scored. In the east end zone.

Twice.

It actually started after Frazier's first fourth-quarter series — an unimpressive three-and-out series. Starting at the Miami 40, I-back Lawrence Phillips went 25 yards to the 15 on an option pitch. Yeah. An option against Miami. Go figure.

After tying the game at 17, Osborne stayed with Frazier and the option and it paid off — big time. Both on third downs. A Frazier option keeper for 25 yards. A Frazier option keeper for 6 on third-and-3 to the Miami 14.

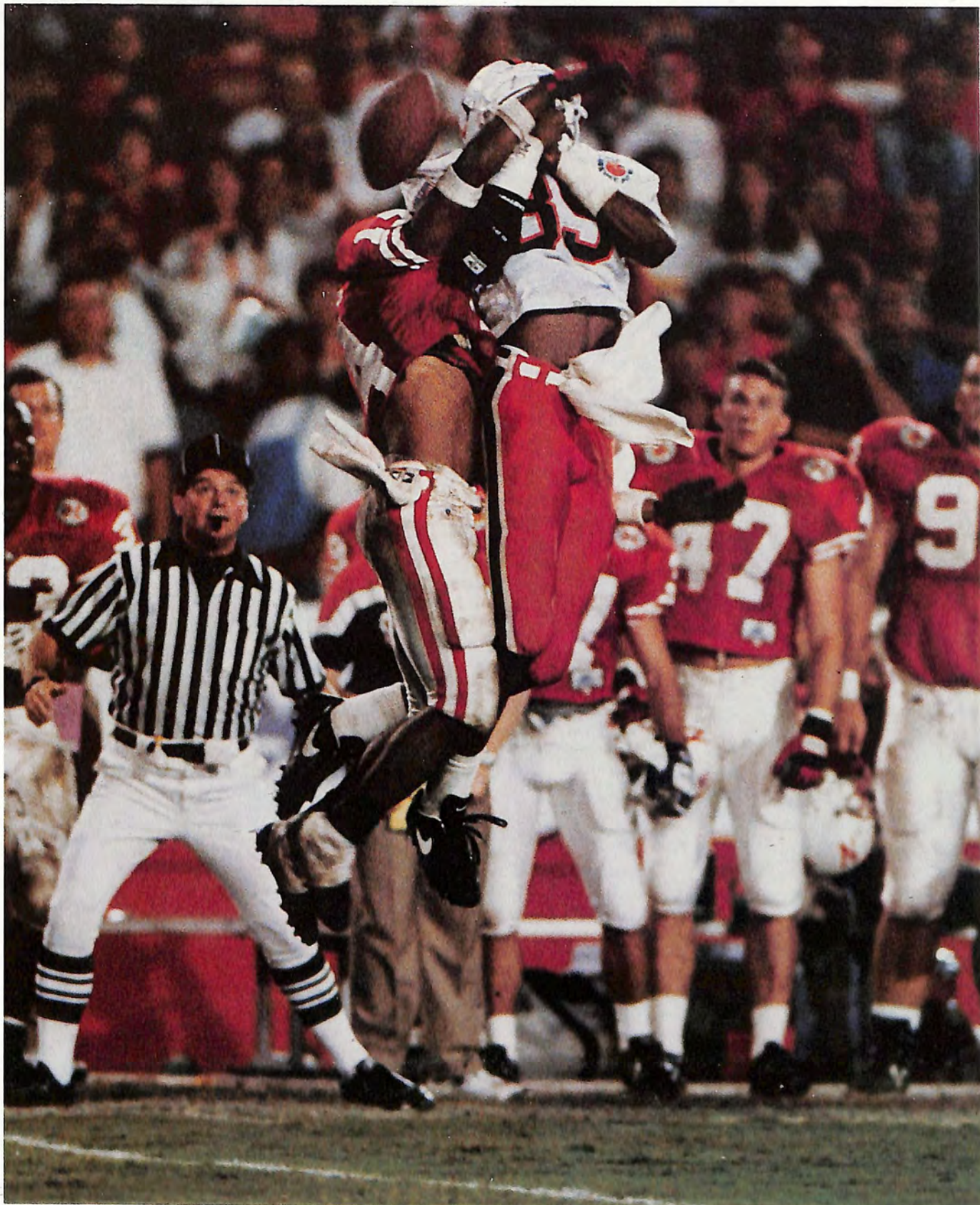
The options set up Schlesinger's runs. And suddenly, in a fourth quarter of an Orange Bowl, Miami was on the run. And on its back.



BILL BATSON

Dwayne Harris tackles Miami quarterback Frank Costa in the end zone for a safety early in the third quarter, pulling the Huskers within eight points. Harris recorded a team-high three sacks.





BILL BATSON

Barron Miles bats a pass away from Miami's Chris T. Jones early in the fourth quarter. The 5-foot-8 Miles gave up 8 inches to Jones and fellow receiver A.C. Tellison. But he broke up three passes to go with his team-high nine tackles.



The east end zone was quivering. It had no chance. This was Osborne's night.

It began like Miami's night. Again. This year was supposed to be different. A better, quicker, saltier Nebraska team. Miami not as dangerous. But the Hurricanes darted out to a 10-0 lead, leaving Nebraska's new fleet defense in the dust, and it looked like the same old, sad story.

Time to roll the dice.

Frazier, after an ill-advised pass off his back foot into double coverage was intercepted on the second series, was replaced by Berringer. The offense perked up.

On his second drive, Berringer led NU on a 40-yard touchdown drive.

About Berringer: He played admirably and without the sulking or funk one might expect from a demotion. His fumble at the Miami 31 hurt. But his interception wasn't his fault. He never should have been passing.

But, again, this was Osborne's night. He moved All-America right guard Brenden Stai to the left side to combat Miami's Warren Sapp.

While Sapp had his moments, it was clear on NU's two late scoring drives that Stai's pounding had taken its toll.

Bravo, Ozzie. He rested Phillips in the first half for the fourth-quarter push. He went back to the option and Schlesinger late when he felt his line would have the upper hand. Heavens. He even tossed out the quarterback slide rule and put Frazier in late "on a gut feeling."

Meanwhile, the football gods were in a generous mood. Miami was called for 11 penalties, including a couple of questionable ones. Of course, Osborne need not apologize for taking any breaks from the football gods.

Miami had its customary stupid penalties. One for celebration. Another personal foul penalty helped set up NU in good field position. Nebraska played solidly. Its defense proud and courageous in holding the line.

And its coach pushed all the right buttons for admission into the national championship fraternity.

The man is hot. If he's going to Las Vegas today, feel free to tag along.



JEFF BEIERMANN

Bryan Pruitt puts an end-zone pin on fellow offensive lineman Brady Caskey. Caskey, from Stanton, Neb., was born two months after Nebraska's last previous national championship.





JEFF BEIERMANN

Ed Stewart helps bury Kansas State's J.J. Smith. NU Coach Tom Osborne said Stewart reminds him of former Husker Mike Croel, a first-round pick in the 1991 National Football League draft. "He can stand in there and play the run, and get out and cover a wide receiver with no help," Osborne said. "Those guys are hard to find."





S e p t e m b e r 4 , 1 9 9 4

# BEST DEFENSE?

*COACHES RELOAD NU WITH IMPROVED PERSONNEL*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

In the current conversation over how good the 1994 Nebraska football defense might be, the coaches remind you not to get hung up on schemes and formations. Instead, think people.

A lineup long on speed and athleticism has allowed the Huskers to do things on defense the past few seasons that previously were deemed not worth the risk.

"People have always asked why we don't blitz more," 18-year defensive assistant Charlie McBride said. "Well, we weren't in disagreement with that. It's just that we couldn't do it."

Why?

McBride answers with a story about the recruitment of defensive backs.

"In the old days," he said, "we would sign six running backs. Then the three who didn't make it we would turn into DBs."

"For a long time most of our DBs came from offense or were walk-ons. We never made a point to recruit a speed guy for back there. And if you don't have the speed to cover, you can't blitz."

In the mid-1980s, things began to change.

McBride said the signing of safety Brian Washington in 1984 was one of Nebraska's most concerted efforts to find a true defensive back. Washington still plays for the New York Jets.

Over the next five years, the Huskers nabbed future NFL defensive backs in Brian Davis, Bruce Pickens, Tahaun Lewis, Tyrone Legette and Curtis

Cotton.

And when the surge of NFL-quality talent in the secondary continued into the 1990s with Kenny Wilhite, John Reece, Toby Wright, Barron Miles and Tyrone Williams, Nebraska changed its base defense for the first time in 30 years.

The Huskers' formal switch last season from a read-and-react alignment of five down linemen and two linebackers to an attacking 4-3 caused a public stir over a defense perhaps unseen in the state since the 1971 national championship season.

The fans' focus on defense has continued this season, and it was heightened by a 31-0 thumping of West Virginia in the Kickoff Classic last Sunday. The Blackshirts held WVU to 89 total yards, the fewest by an NU opponent since 1984. Coincidentally, that was the last time NU led the country in total defense.

Nebraska Head Coach Tom Osborne said he's happy to see the defense in the spotlight. But he said talk that it only took a change in schemes to jump back into the national championship picture is wrong.

"Going to the 4-3 was a good move for us, but the scheme isn't the answer," he said. "It's more personnel. The biggest thing on defense is to have defensive backs who can play man-to-man and hold up. That gives you much more freedom with everybody else."

"If you're trying to hide your defensive backs, you can't attack. And over the past three to four years, we've had a little better quality of defensive backs."

McBride, NU's defensive coordinator the past 13





Senior Barron Miles was a key player on the Husker defense and special teams. "From blocked kicks to dominant play as a defensive back, he's been tremendous for us," said his position coach, George Darlington.

fense sooner," he said. "But it wasn't until we felt we had a couple of cornerbacks who were true cover guys that we even put in our dime package." In the "dime" passing defense — first used regularly in 1988 — Nebraska took one lineman and one linebacker out of its traditional 5-2 set and replaced them with a pass rusher and an extra defensive back.

That more aggressive set, Osborne said, led to some unexpected developments.

"We began to see where we were holding up better against the run than we thought," he said. "In some cases, it was better than in the old standard 50."

The problem that arose, Osborne said, was confusion in trying to mix the 5-2 and 4-3 defenses.

"There was difficulty in trying to adjust to all sets from both defenses," he said. "Going to the 4-3 suited our personnel and simplified things. It made adjustments a lot easier and cut down on the confusion. It let our players lay their ears back more.

"But we wouldn't have been able to do a lot of this without great man-to-man coverage, which we got because we've had some NFL-type guys in our secondary."

The NU coaches said there was no particular slap in the face from a Miami, a Florida State or a Washington that awoke them to the need for speed on defense, especially in the secondary.

"This wasn't anything we didn't know," Osborne





said. "I had a couple of Florida writers at the Orange Bowl one year ask why people hadn't woken up to the fact that you need speed on defense.

"We've known that for a long time. It's just that it's harder for us to recruit speed."

George Darlington, NU's secondary coach and the last member of Osborne's original coaching staff, said population and geography have hampered the Huskers' efforts to recruit speedy players.

"The overall philosophy of defense hasn't changed nearly as much as the general public is making out of this change of alignment," Darlington said. "Most, if not all, of our defensive coaches over the years have wanted to get guys who can run.

"The problem is that within a 500-mile radius of Lincoln there isn't that much overall speed. So even though we've always wanted fast guys, it's still a matter of getting them here."

McBride said that point is driven home in talks he has had with defensive coaches at Florida State.

"I've had good friendships with those guys going clear back to 1980," he said.

"And I've always admired their ability to get defenses that move around and really play.

"But they have a lot better access to those type of kids than we do. We just have to kind of hope for the best. We can't sit there and pick and choose from a whole state full of burners like Florida State, Miami and Florida can."

Despite the constant challenges in recruiting top-flight players to Nebraska, McBride said, he can't think of a place he would rather coach.

"I don't know what heaven is like," he said.

"But this must be close. Tom has really let us coach. And that's the biggest thing an assistant coach can ask for.

"He has his standards and rules that he wants you to coach by. But when it comes down to game plans and what to call, he rarely says no because he feels like we pretty much know what's best. It's not like some places I've been where you work on a game plan and the head coach comes in on Thursday and changes half of it. That will drive you nuts."

McBride and his staff have earned that trust by forming defensive units that have ranked in the Top 15 in total defense 11 of the past 14 years.

"I rely on them a lot," Osborne said. "It's impossible for one person to coach both sides of the ball and be intimately involved in what you would call on offense and defense."

Osborne, the offensive coordinator as well as head coach, said he spends the first one hour of daily meetings with the defensive staff.

"We start at 7 in the morning," he said. "I look at their films and keep track of what they are doing. Sometimes in the evenings I sit in with them, too. I might ask a few questions or make a suggestion or two."

On game day, Osborne said, he listens to the headphone conversations of the defensive coaches about two-thirds of the time.

"Again, I may make some suggestions," he said. "But I don't stay with it enough full-time to feel real comfortable and say I'm going to call defenses."

McBride said there are times he wonders why he was named defensive coordinator in 1982 after five years as defensive line coach.

"I wasn't overly excited to get the title," he said. "There were people who had been on the staff longer than me. I felt a little embarrassed about it.

"The other guys here now could all do the job. That's why I've never tried to put myself in a position of supremacy or tried to act like a general. I try to get us all together and let them coach the way they know how."

McBride is a Chicago native who was an All-Big Eight end and punter at Colorado. After playing one season with the Denver Broncos, he returned to Chicago to coach high school football. Then came stops at Colorado, Arizona State and Wisconsin before his arrival at Nebraska.

Hang around practice long enough and you'll see some of McBride's Chicago toughness come out.

"But I've always believed if you're willing to get after a kid and show him up that you'd better be ready to hug his neck, too," McBride said.

"Overall, I think I've got a pretty good ability to relate to kids. Sometimes I'm off the air. But I really try to be aware of how our kids are feeling and doing."

Joining McBride on the defensive staff are Darlington, the secondary coach in his 22nd year; Tony Samuel, outside linebackers in his ninth year; and Kevin Steele, inside linebackers in his sixth year.

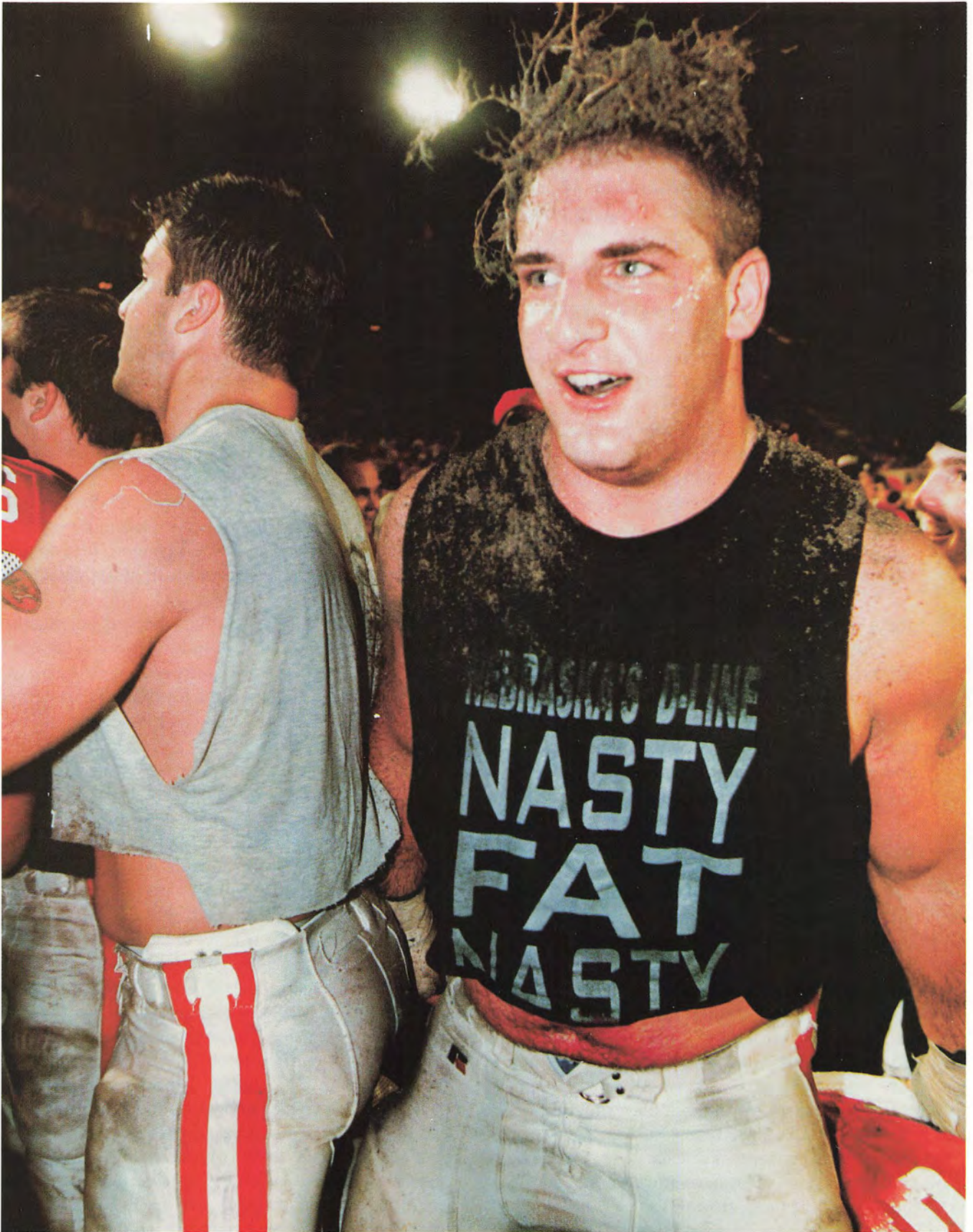
"I think our continuity on the staff is the envy of every program in the country," Darlington said. "And just because we've all been around a while doesn't mean we've vegetated as far as learning.

"A lot of people say the only way to get new ideas is to bring people in from the outside. But if the old coaches stay abreast of trends, you get the best of both worlds. And I think the average fan would be shocked at how much we study professional and college teams."

Darlington is the professorial member of the defense.

PHIL  
JOHNSON





JEFF BUNDY

Christian Peter wears a piece of Orange Bowl turf as a crown. Said Coach Tom Osborne: "It's a great way to close it out, to play Miami in Miami and finally beat them. We've had a terrible time with those folks."



"George is probably the most knowledgeable coach on our staff as far as knowing the game of football," McBride said. "He's a real student of the game and always has been. He's probably as good a guy to defend the option as there is in the country."

Samuel, who often has soft jazz music playing in his office, offers a calming influence to the defense. His players describe him as laid-back and approachable.

He played outside linebacker at Nebraska from 1974 through 1977. After coaching at Western Michigan and Stanford, Samuel returned to NU in 1986.

"Tony has a great feel for the position," McBride said. "And he has a God-given talent for working with kids."

"Nobody seems to have a better handle on when a kid is overworked or when he needs to get on somebody than Tony."

Steele, who played linebacker at Tennessee, adds some Southern sass to the defense. His yelps echo through the stadium during live practice drills, and he'll jump into a pile of bodies to praise or scold a defender. After staying at Tennessee to coach from 1979 through 1982, Steele went to New Mexico State and Oklahoma State before returning to Tennessee in 1987. He arrived at Nebraska in 1989.

"Kevin has been a linebacker and a secondary coach," McBride said. "So he's got a great ability to understand coverages."

"When we run into problems, Kevin is one of the first to have an idea. He knows the secondary and the linebackers have to be coordinated, so his background has really helped."

McBride laughed softly when told it had been almost two years since a World-Herald Voice From the Grandstand letter had called for his resignation.

"People look at defense as a necessary evil," he said. "About the only time they talk about us is when things aren't going right."

Has that created any jealousies among defensive coaches or players at Nebraska?

"I've never fielded any complaints," McBride said. "At times, though, I've got a little feeling of that from the players."

"There are places, especially in the South, where defense is more of a tradition. Offense is our tradition. When you lead the country in total offense and scoring so many times, how can it not be?"

Darlington recalled the pregame buildup to the 1984 Nebraska-Oklahoma game.

"We were first in the country in defense," he said. "And they were second or third. But all the talk was about their great defense. You hardly heard a word about ours."

"But we try not to get caught up in which segment of the team gets the most 'pub.' If we play well, we know the accolades will come."

By the end of the season, will people still be talking about this defense as one of Nebraska's best?

"We think we're going to be very good on defense," Darlington said. "But I remember a similar start in 1988 when we beat what we thought was a pretty good Texas A&M team in the Kickoff Classic."

"A couple of weeks later, we lost about 100-0 to UCLA (actually 41-28). We made some adjustments and later beat Colorado 7-0 and Oklahoma 7-3. So I think we ought to play the whole season before we crown ourselves king."



Tony Veland upends Kordell Stewart after a 2-yard gain on third and 10. The Buffaloes were 0 for 11 on third-down conversions and 0 for 4 on fourth downs.



# WIEGERT BUSTS LOOSE FOR NU

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**SEPT. 22**—Somewhere inside Nebraska tackle Zach Wiegert's 6-foot-5, 300-pound body lurks a ball carrier longing to get out.

"I used to be kind of bummed out about being an offensive lineman," the fifth-year senior said. "You don't get much recognition or ever get to touch the ball or get in the spotlight.

"When I first got here, I really wanted stuff like that. I thought I was a good enough athlete to get a chance to do those things. Sometimes I still wish I could touch the ball and show what I could do with it."

But those desires aren't as strong today as in the past.

What started the former Class C-1 all-stater at Fremont (Neb.) Bergan High on the road to finding peace as an offensive lineman was earning playing time as a redshirt freshman nearly equal to that of senior starter Brian Boerboom.

Prosperity soon followed.

As a sophomore, Wiegert became a starter and used his urge to run to mow down enough defenders to be voted first-team All-Big Eight.

That honor was repeated last season.

Now he is on track to become just the third lineman in NU history to be a three-time all-conference pick since two-platoon football began in the mid-1960s. The others were center Dave Rimington (1980-81-82) and Will Shields (1990-91-92).

"I'm happy being an offensive lineman now," Wiegert said. "I've found out how important it is to be a good offensive lineman. You actually can get recognition if you do your job right."

The latest example of that was in Saturday's 49-21 romp over UCLA. ABC-TV picked Wiegert as Nebraska's offensive player of the game — an award usually reserved for a quarterback, running back or receiver — after the Huskers rushed for 484 yards. But far bigger honors are possible.

Wiegert's name is appearing on check lists for the Outland Trophy, given by the Football Writers Association of America since 1946 to the nation's top interior lineman, and the Lombardi Award, given by the Houston Rotary Club since 1970 to the country's top lineman or linebacker.

Three previous Husker offensive linemen have won the awards. They are Rimington (1981 and 1982 Outland, 1982 Lombardi), guard Dean Steinkuhler (1983 Outland and Lombardi) and Shields (1992 Outland). Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne said Wiegert

is good enough to be the fourth. "Zach certainly is deserving of being in that league with guys like Steinkuhler," Osborne said. "He's better than some that we've had win trophies."

Zach's brother, Erik, a 1991 all-conference guard at Nebraska, said he can't remember a better Husker lineman in the years he has watched or played for the Huskers.

His knowledge of the game and his size and mobility are as good as anyone I've seen," Erik said in a phone interview from Omaha, where he works at Transportation Specialists. "And I think most of the coaches down there would go along with that.

"I always knew he had the ability and the size to be great. He's so natural at 300 pounds and such a good athlete. He just had to work at it."

At times, the will to work wasn't there. "Zach Wiegert said he remembers sometimes loafing on offense in high school to save his energy for playing defense.

"I wasn't the greatest high school player," he said. "I was OK. But I got my scholarship more on potential than anything.

"They came and watched me play basketball my senior year before they offered me. I think that's what finally sold them."

Osborne said Wiegert wasn't "a high-priority guy" in recruiting. "It's pretty accurate to say that he wasn't a great high school player," the coach said. "But we thought Zach, for having a big frame, had good feet."

His first few weeks as a redshirt freshman at Nebraska weren't overly impressive, either. Wiegert said former assistant coach Jack Pierce, who coordinated the scout teams, told the offensive line coaches and Osborne that he was lazy.

"And I kind of was," Wiegert said. "The coaches came and talked to me. Then I went to practice and Jack said, 'Wiegert, you'd better be better on the scout team next year than this year.'

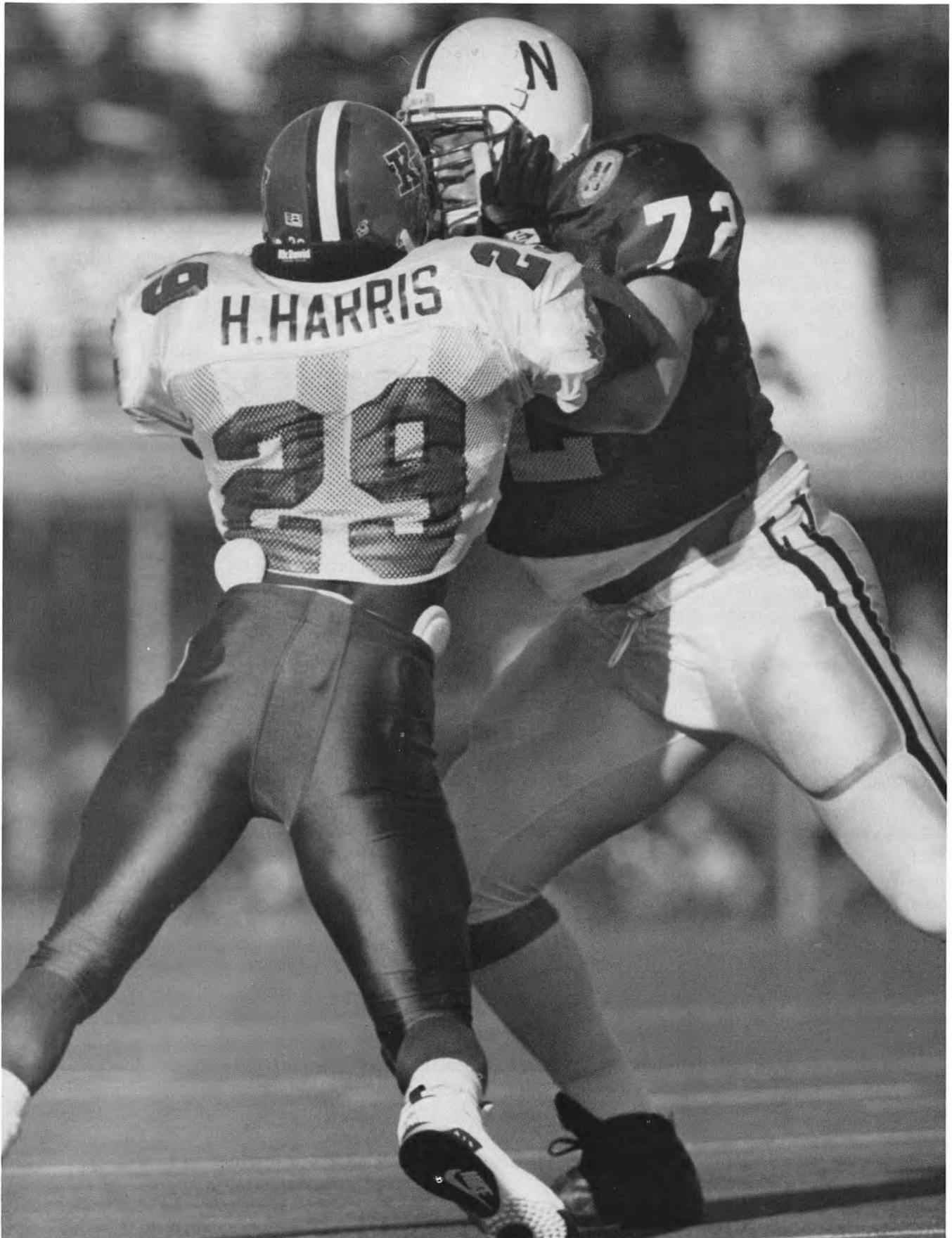
"I said, 'Jack, I'm not going to be on the scout team next year.' And I wasn't. He told me later he was glad to hear me say that."

That drive to succeed when challenged was apparent early, said Hedy Wiegert, Zach's mother. "I didn't envision anything like he is doing now," Mrs. Wiegert said in a phone interview from Omaha, where she works at Noll Human Resources. "But I always thought Zach would be successful because he was very energetic and curious about things."

"I've always expected him to end up doing something rewarding."

Mrs. Wiegert, who was divorced nearly 20 years ago, said two people helped her guide Zach through his formative years.





JEFF BEIERMANN

Zach Wiegert overpowers Harold Harris of Kansas. Wiegert earned a perfect 2.0 grade against the Jayhawks, the first one for an NU lineman in Coach Tom Osborne's memory.



One was his uncle, Erich Wiegert, a scholarship basketball letterman at Creighton from 1968 through 1970.

"He was like a father figure to Zach," Mrs. Wiegert said. The other key figure was Zach's brother, Erik.

"With me being a single mother with two kids and two jobs, he and Erik spent a lot of time together," Mrs. Wiegert said. "And Zach looked up to him a lot."

"Erik is a very self-directed individual who is very responsible and stands by his commitments. So he helped Zach a lot."

Erik said Zach, while still in high school, often visited him in Lincoln while he played at Nebraska. "I think coming down to see me was a pretty big advantage to him," Erik said. "He got to meet a lot of my friends and know some of the linemen. Compared to when I started college, I think he got a lot better perspective about what it was all about."

Zach agrees. "It made it a lot easier," he said. "It was nice to have someone show you the ropes when you first get here."

"But as far as football goes, it all has to be done yourself. No one is going to help you with that."

Zach Wiegert played in the Nebraska high school Shrine Game the week before his first fall camp with the Huskers. He was one of just a handful of non-Class A players.

"Being from a small school, I didn't know if I was as good as those guys," he said. "After that game, I knew I was definitely as good as those guys."

"Then when I came in here, they had a lot of big-name recruits in the offensive line, so I kind of wondered again."

Wiegert and fellow freshman linemen Rob Zatechka and Brenden Stai — all now starters — redshirted in 1990, which meant they spent the season blocking future National Football League players Mike Croel, Kenny Walker and Joe Sims.

"That's probably the best way to learn is to let those guys throw you around," Wiegert said. "But after about two weeks of those guys beating us up, me and Stai and Rob started fighting back."

"We had some good brawls. But we've got a no-fighting rule in practice now, which is probably good."

After a strong spring following his redshirt season, Wiegert emerged as an alternate in 1991 with Boerboom.

He became a starter in 1992. But Wiegert's rise as a player coincided with a decline in the classroom. This was after he posted a 3.6 grade average on a 4.0 scale his first semester at NU.

"We had a couple of years where things were a little touch and go academically and on some other things he was supposed to follow through on," Osborne said.

"He was a little undisciplined."

Wiegert said better time management eventually solved his problems."

When I first got here, I was trying so hard to get a spot on the team and be a good player and make new friends and be Mr. Popular," he said. "Now, I've got friends and a spot on the team. I know where I'm at and what I want to be."

"I learned that you have to go to class and take care of business. Besides, you can only go out and do so many things before it gets old. Now after practice, I'll just sit at home, watch TV and go to bed."

Osborne said Wiegert's progress in taking care of business was shown by his election as a captain this fall. "He's not perceived by his teammates as a goof-off," the coach said. "He has matured a lot."

Wiegert, on track to graduate in May with a degree in economics, said he also has become a better student of football.

"I take pride in trying to be a technician," he said. "I like to think I know the Nebraska offense as well as any other lineman who has been here."

The skills with which Wiegert has carried out those assignments have rarely been questioned. In junior high, he was a 200-pound point guard. "Even though I was the biggest, I could dribble and shoot the best," Wiegert said.

Later, at 250 pounds, he was the trailer and 3-point shooter on the Fremont Bergan fast break. Osborne said he has toyed with the idea of moving Wiegert to tight end.

"If we had someone else to play tackle, we'd love to put Zach at tight end," he said. "He wouldn't be a deep threat. But he would be a devastating blocker and a good short receiver."

Wiegert said he's surprised at how others view his physical skills.

"To me, it doesn't seem like I'm running that fast or jumping that high," he said. "I've always looked at guys like Lawrence Phillips and wished I could run like that."

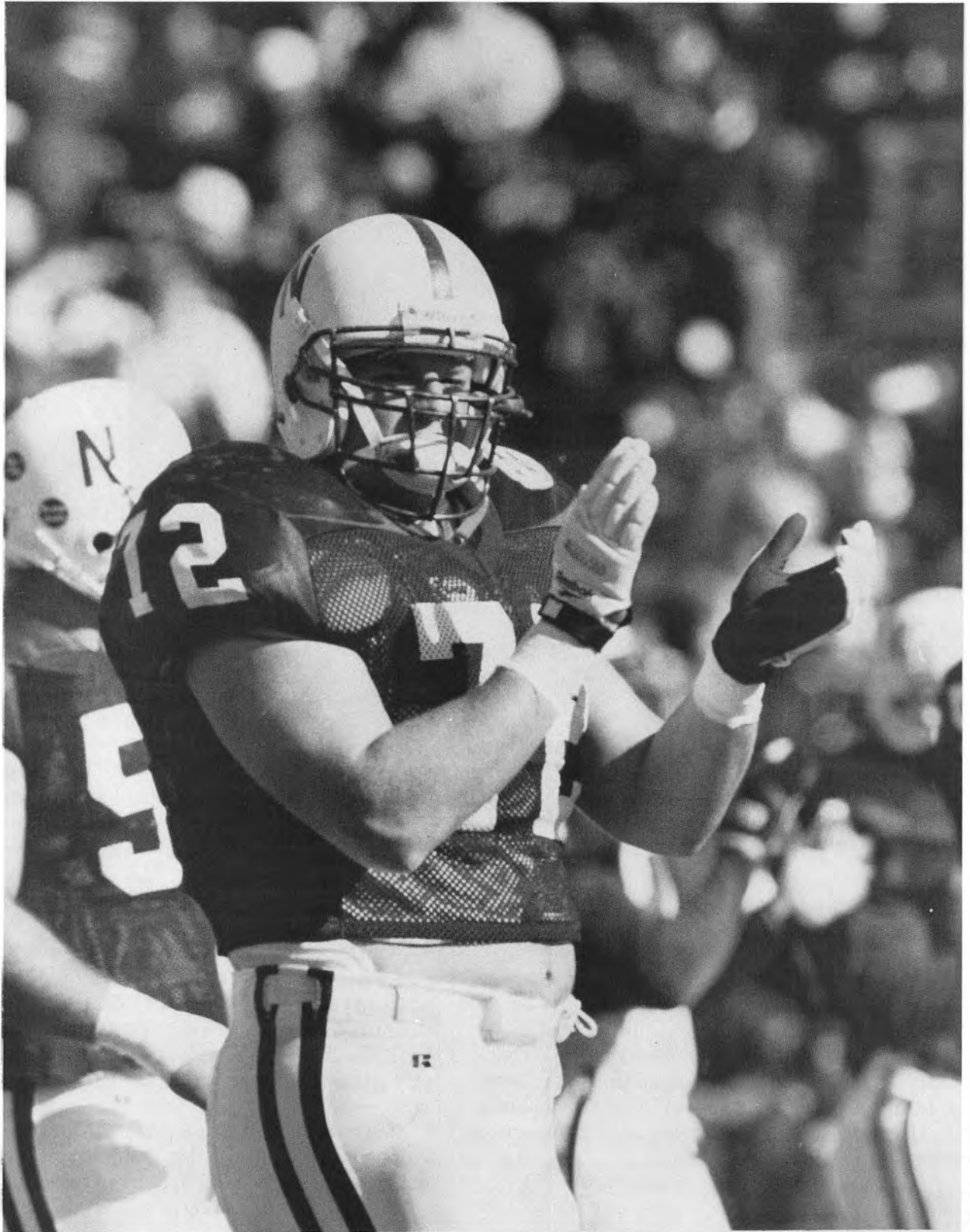
"I don't try to say I'm a good athlete for a 300-pounder. I try to say I'm a pretty good athlete, period."

Hearing his name mentioned in the same sentence with pretty good athletes such as Steinkuhler and Rimington brings a momentary silence from Wiegert.

"They were the great, great players at my position when I was growing up," he said. "Those guys' names will never be forgotten around here because of what they gave to the program on and off the field, and what they did in the pros."

"If I can play up to that caliber and have my name remembered like theirs are, it would probably be the best accomplishment of my life."



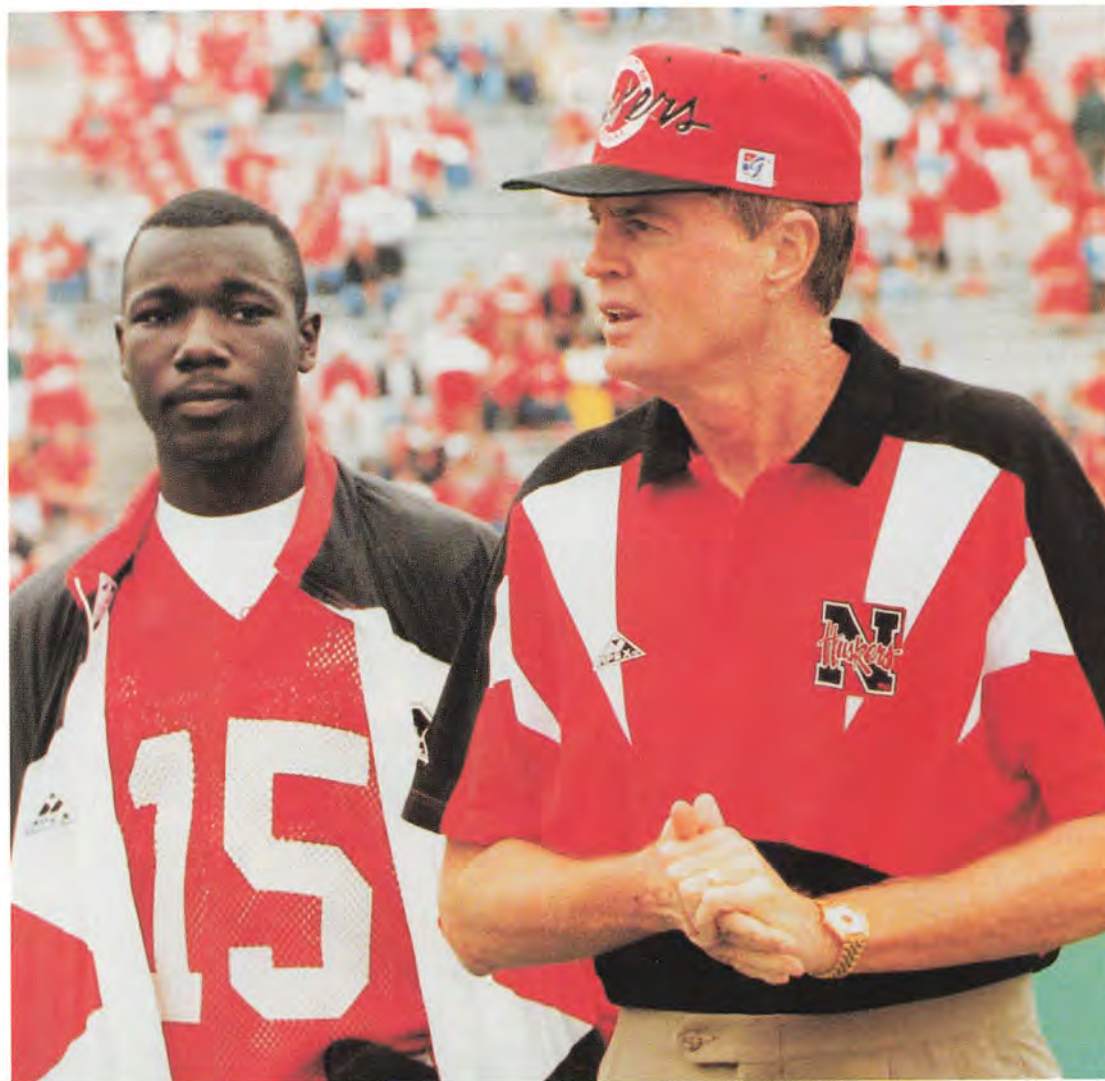


BILL BATSON

CHAMPIONS

Zach Wiegert became the sixth Husker in 24 years to win the Outland Trophy. "I take pride in trying to be a technician," he said. "I like to think I know the Nebraska offense as well as any other lineman who has been here."





JEFF BUNDY

Tommie Frazier stayed close to Tom Osborne most of the season after a blood clot in his leg sidelined him in late September. The only game he didn't watch was the Oct. 8 Big Eight opener against Oklahoma State when he was in the hospital after leg surgery.

## SECOND CLOT LIKELY TO END FRAZIER'S SEASON

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**OCT. 5**— A new blood clot was discovered Tuesday behind the right knee of Nebraska quarterback Tommie Frazier, leading to his admission to the intensive-care unit of Bryan Memorial Hospital and putting the Heisman Trophy candidate's return for this season in jeopardy.

NU Coach Tom Osborne said of Frazier: "He certainly isn't going to play any time very soon. Quite likely from all appearances, he won't play this year." After Tuesday's practice, Osborne said the new clot was discovered during scheduled tests earlier Tuesday on Frazier, who was hospitalized for four days last

week to dissolve a 6- to 8-inch clot in the same area. Osborne said the clot reformation, which occurred while Frazier was taking anti-coagulant medication, was disturbing news.

"I think the thinking now is that they'll treat him pretty conservatively," Osborne said. "We'll just have to see how things go the next few days."

Osborne said doctors told him the new clot is at least the same size as the first.

Osborne expressed surprise at Tuesday's news. "I just didn't think it would re-form," he said. "It's a surprise to everybody." It's been an unusual thing. They just don't very often

see it in an athlete of this type without a real massive hit."

Frazier, in previous interviews, has said he can't remember one hit or incident leading to his leg pain, which he first noticed before the UCLA game Sept. 17.

At the time Frazier's first blood clot behind his knee was discovered a week ago Sunday, a smaller superficial clot was noticed in his right calf, Osborne said.

Surgery now might be performed to tie off the vein housing the smaller clot, Osborne said. Extensive testing has been done that appears to rule out a blood chemistry problem or cancer as reasons for the clot formations, Osborne said.

"So that leaves trauma," he said. "And there doesn't appear to have been much trauma. That's why everybody is kind of shaking their head."



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Being Good Isn't Enough for Huskers' Stewart

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**OCT. 20**— Lining a wall of the Memorial Stadium lounge are portraits of the 71 Nebraska football players who have earned first-team All-America honors.

At the end of an interview in the lounge this week, senior weakside linebacker Ed Stewart glanced toward that wall, paused, looked back again and said: "I wouldn't mind coming back here a few years from now and seeing my face up there."

At the rate Stewart is shadowing and clobbering anything across from him, his wish could come true.

In the past month, the three-year starter from Chicago has recorded 10 tackles against UCLA, 12 against Wyoming, 10 against Oklahoma State and 10 more against Kansas State — including an 8-yard sack — to boost his team-high tackle total to 58.

"Ed blitzes so hard that he peels the skin off his eyeballs," NU Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride said. "That's how hard he plays all the time. He's so dependable. He's always good."

But good wasn't good enough to satisfy the 6-foot-1, 215-pound co-captain.

"I felt I was playing well early in the season," Stewart said. "I was reaching goals and leading the team in tackles."

"But it wasn't what I expected of myself. I have very high expectations. I want to separate myself from just being a good player. I want to be thought of as a great player."

Inside Linebackers Coach Kevin Steele said he's noticed.

"Eddie's playing with a different energy level lately," he said. "He has mastered the art of the now-you-see-me, now-you-don't linebacker."

"The opponents see him line up all over the place and

have to ask, 'Is he playing man-to-man or zone? Is he blitzing? Is he playing linebacker or strong safety?'"

"Stewart's versatility draws high praise from Nebraska Head Coach Tom Osborne, who sees similarities to ex-Husker Mike Croel, the fourth overall pick in the 1991 National Football League draft.

"He's a little like Mike Croel in that he can stand in there and play the run, and get out and cover a wide receiver with no help," Osborne said. "Those guys are hard to find."

Steele said Stewart fits in the rarest of categories — a college player who knows his position and responsibilities as well as the coaches.

"Guys who coach in the NFL experience that with players who are around eight or nine years," Steele said. "Those guys coach themselves, and often come up with ideas to use."

"That's the level Eddie has reached in college, and that really makes it fun. The experience I'm having with Eddie now is like Tony Samuel (outside linebackers coach) had with Trev Alberts last year and probably like Coach Osborne had with Turner Gill when Turner played quarterback here."

Steele said there are two steps a player takes to reach the level of being, in essence, his own mentor.

"First, he makes the plays he's supposed to make," Steele said. "Then he separates himself from the pack and becomes a great player by making other plays, too."

"Eddie's at the point where he knows exactly how



JEFF BEIERMANN

Ed Stewart puts the heat on Miami quarterback Frank Costa. "Ed blitzes so hard that he peels the skin off his eyeballs," NU Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride said. "That's how hard he plays all the time."

CHAMPIONS



far he can roam and how much he can get away with and still do his job."

Stewart said he has had visions of playing that way since he shifted from strong safety to linebacker in 1991 and became a starter in 1992.

"It's taken awhile to get to that level," he said. "But now it's like a dream come true.

"The biggest thing is to have fun. And the way to have fun at linebacker is to hit people and punish them. That's what I'm doing."

Steele said a talk he once had with all-pro defensive end Reggie White helped him teach Stewart how to reach a higher level of play.

"Reggie basically said he knew not every play was going to be perfect, but that his effort was going to be," Steele said. "He didn't care if he got blocked doing it.

"Eddie, earlier in his career, would play lights out and then something would go wrong and you'd see him become robotic and go back to the basics. That's OK, but he doesn't need to do that now. With his experience, he can cut loose and go make plays."

Talk of becoming an All-American and perhaps playing professional football brought a smile to Stewart's face as he recalled his days growing up on the South Side of Chicago.

"My first sport was baseball," he said. "And I was pretty good at it. Sometimes I wish I had stayed with that."

His introduction to organized football came at his first practice at Mount Carmel High, which sent wingback Nate Turner and middle guard Mike Murray to Nebraska in the late 1980s.

"I remember going to pick out pads as a freshman," Stewart said. "I didn't know exactly which ones I needed because I had never played tackle football before.

"But the hitting came pretty naturally to me. I was pretty good at it."

Despite that, Stewart spent two seasons on offense as a receiver and running back before a teammate's injury allowed him to switch to defense for the final six games as a senior.

"The first time I saw him on film," NU's McBride said, "I knew he was a guy we wanted. He played so hard and always seemed to be in the right place at the right time."

A home recruiting visit from McBride and Osborne initially didn't change Stewart's mind about wanting to attend Michigan. But when the Wolverines canceled a teammate's recruiting trip at the last minute, Stewart said he had second thoughts about going there himself and got back in contact with

Nebraska. Once in Lincoln, he found that staying there while redshirting as a freshman was a chore.

"I hated it here," Stewart said. "A friend of mine, LeRoi Jones, and I took turns talking each other out of leaving. He eventually did leave."

Stewart did, too, for two days during fall camp in 1991 after switching from strong safety to linebacker. At 6-0 and 204 pounds at the time, Stewart said he didn't like the constant contact with offensive linemen at his new position.

But McBride said he wasn't worried about losing a prospect.

"I knew Ed wasn't too wild about changing positions," McBride said. "And I knew he was feeling kind of alone.

"I grew up in Chicago, so I know what it's like for a guy to come here. It's culture shock. I also knew if he went home that his parents would send him back or his high school coach would kill him. And Ed's not a quitter. So he came back."

By switching positions, Stewart became a trailblazer. Before 1991, Nebraska linebackers usually were bigger, run-support players.

But as the Husker coaches moved to make the defense better against passing teams, changing last year to a full-time 4-3 base defense, smaller and speedier linebackers such as Stewart — with 4.73-second speed in the 40-yard dash — were in demand.

"Eddie was the first safety to move to linebacker," Steele said. "And now he has been followed by Ernie Beler, Troy Dumas, Jamel Williams and Matt Aden."

Stewart's mind hasn't been only on football this season. He already has his bachelor's degree in psychology and has begun nine hours of work toward an advanced degree.

"I definitely want to get my master's," he said. "Then I'd like to go into counseling work."

One idea Stewart has is to work in a university's academic services department as a counselor for out-of-state minority students.

"There is so much to go through coming to a place like Nebraska from a place like Chicago," he said. "From what I learned in my experiences, I really think I could help."

But before helping others, Stewart said, he would like to help himself and his teammates win a national championship.

If that happens, Steele said, an All-America certificate could come Stewart's way.

"His play here lately has the makings of that," Steele said. "He's got the momentum to do for this team down the stretch what you would say an All-American does for his team."



## UNSUNG PHILLIPS RUNS WITH THE BEST

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

OCT. 27— USA Today asked 56 Heisman Trophy voters last week to name their midseason choices for the award that goes to college football's outstanding player. Of those polled, according to national college writer Steve Wieberg, 27 selected one player and 29 picked first, second and third choices.

So how many votes came in for Nebraska I-back Lawrence Phillips, the nation's No. 3 rusher at 154.1 yards a game and the first Division I back to top 1,000 yards this season?

"None," Wieberg said Wednesday in a phone interview from Kansas City, Mo. "Tommie Frazier got a third-place vote, but Phillips didn't get a mention."

Getting fewer votes than a teammate who was sidelined for the season by injury after four games isn't the only slight Phillips has endured. CNN, on its Heisman watch this week, listed four running backs — including Michigan tailback Tyrone Wheatley, who missed two full games and much of a third with injury — before mentioning Phillips.

"In listening to sportscasters from around the country," NU Running Backs Coach Frank Solich said, "Lawrence's name hasn't been thrown into the mix quite like other top backs."

"But he has shown to all of us that he's a great player. He's certainly not underappreciated by the peo-



JEFF BEIERMAN

Lawrence Phillips, shown eluding UCLA's Paul Guidry, rushed for 1,722 yards in the regular season. Only one Heisman Trophy winner since 1970 gained more yards as a sophomore: Herschel Walker of Georgia, who ran for 1,891 yards in 1981.



ple close to the program and who know football. And we're the ones who count."

This season, Phillips has tied Bobby Reynolds' 44-year-old school record of eight straight 100-yard games to start a season. The past two of those — 126 yards at Kansas State and 110 at Missouri — came despite his playing with a badly sprained left thumb and being the opponents' focal point as NU cut its offensive repertoire in half to protect its injured and inexperienced quarterbacks.

Phillips is just 23 yards behind national rushing leader Rashaan Salaam of Colorado (1,256 yards to 1,233) with four fewer carries. If the 6-foot, 200-pounder from West Covina, Calif., continues at his current pace, he'll finish the season with 1,850 yards, the 12th-best total in NCAA history and the second-best by a sophomore behind the 1,908 yards by Michigan State's Lorenzo White in 1985.

Even with those credentials, one person not seeking more publicity for Phillips is Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne.

Don't get the wrong idea from that, he said.

Lawrence has got the complete package," Osborne said. "He's got speed, he's tough, he catches the ball well, he gets yards after contact and he can go the distance."

Osborne said his lack of tub-thumping for Phillips is in keeping with his policy of rarely touting players for individual honors, especially before season's end. "I get a little tired of hearing, 'Heisman Trophy this and greatest ever that,'" he said. "It gets overdone. You tend to stay away from a lot of superlatives, particularly when it's with a guy who is a second-year player.

"Usually when a guy has numbers like Lawrence does, it's a combination of his ability and a pretty good supporting cast. He's had help. But he is a tough guy. He'll come to play every time."

No greater evidence of that was seen than two weeks ago in Nebraska's 17-6 win at Kansas State. The Huskers played the first half with a walk-on quarterback and the second half with a quarterback who had suffered a partially collapsed lung the previous two weeks.

Phillips carried the ball or caught a pass on 17 of the Huskers' first 18 plays. The totals reached 19 of 24 before he smacked his left thumb on a defender's helmet just before halftime.

X-rays showed no broken bones. But Phillips hopped from foot to foot in pain as trainers numbed the thumb with a freezing spray and taped it.

"A lot of very good running backs would have sat out the second half with that type of injury," Solich

said. "But Lawrence isn't that type of kid.

"His only concern was how he would carry the ball. Then he said he'd just carry it in one arm, and that everything would be fine."

After sitting out the first series of the third quarter, Phillips ran for 64 yards in the second half and set up NU's second touchdown with a 17-yard run.

Several longtime Nebraska football observers, including Solich, said Phillips' play-with-pain performance at K-State reminded them of Heisman Trophy-winner Mike Rozier's effort in 1982 against Missouri.

Rozier wasn't scheduled to play that day because of a severe hip pointer. But after quarterback Turner Gill was knocked out of the game with a first-quarter concussion, Rozier came off the bench to run for 139 yards to help Nebraska rally for a 23-19 victory.

Solich isn't ready to compare Phillips to past Husker I-back greats. At least not yet.

"Lawrence has to do it over the long haul," he said. "But to this point, to play as a true freshman last year and then to show the skills he has this year says a lot about him. He's doing everything we hoped and felt he could do."

Phillips told several national college football writers this week what he has told local reporters before — the lack of publicity doesn't bother him.

"I don't get upset because I don't get mentioned," he said. "We're doing a good job, and I'm proud of what I've accomplished.

"Winning the Heisman would be nice. But the biggest thing we're after at Nebraska is a national championship."

To stay in the race to be No. 1, the second- and third-ranked Huskers need a win over Colorado, also ranked second and third, in Saturday's 11:08 a.m. game at Memorial Stadium. Phillips said he won't have to carry as heavy a load this week because quarterback Brook Berringer is healthy again.

"Now we can get the rest of our offense back in," Phillips said. "It won't be just focused on me like it has been the past two weeks.

"It takes some of the pressure off. And it will open up a lot more running lanes for me with us being able to pass and run a little option."

Phillips said he's not dragging physically, despite playing with a bull's-eye on his chest the past two weeks.

"Considering the number of carries and the hits I've taken, I don't feel that bad," he said. "I'm sore. But I'm not sore out of the ordinary.

"We'll all be ready on Saturday. This is for all the marbles, so we're ready to put it all on the line."





JEFF BUNDY

Lawrence Phillips gained 178 yards in 19 carries against UCLA on his way to 1,722 yards for the season, the second-best total ever by a Husker back. Mike Rozier ran for 2,148 yards in 1983.





The card section at Memorial Stadium commemorated the Huskers' 200th straight sellout Oct. 29 against Colorado. Washington Redskins have sold out more consecutive home football games.

## NO END IN SIGHT FOR SELLOUT HUSKER CROWDS

BY ERIC OLSON

**OCT. 28** — When it comes to college football attendance, there really is no place like Nebraska.

Saturday's game against Colorado will mark the 200th straight sellout for a Nebraska game at 72,700-seat Memorial Stadium. (Total attendance, including news media and stadium workers, normally exceeds

75,000). The streak, which dates to the Kennedy administration, is an ongoing NCAA record. Amazing is the word NU officials, coaches and players used most often to describe the feat. The streak is one of the longest in sports on any level.

Only the professional Washington Redskins, with 209 straight capacity crowds since their 1966 season opener, have sold out more consecutive home football games.

Bob Devaney, the coach when NU's streak started Nov. 3, 1962, said sellouts have become synonymous with Cornhusker football.



"This is amazing," he said, "but I'll be even more amazed on the day that we don't fill it up. I can't see any chance of it letting up."

Bill Byrne, who replaced Devaney as athletic director in 1992 after eight years at the University of Oregon, said he continues to be impressed by the fan support.

"The best way I can describe it is as a relationship between a parent and child, and that's unconditional love," Byrne said. "The fans love the Huskers. There is a great emotional outpouring that the athletes and staff feel."

That sentiment was endorsed two years ago when *Sports Illustrated* labeled Nebraska fans as the "best fans in college football."

Though the stadium fills every Saturday, a Nebraska football ticket isn't as hot as one might think. The season ticket renewal rate is about 95 percent. And contrary to popular belief, there is no waiting list.

The Redskins, on the other hand, have more than 17,000 people waiting for their tickets.

The Huskers' streak has been in jeopardy at times. Over the years, several nonconference opponents have returned tickets they couldn't sell, sometimes as late as a day or two before the game. On those occasions, NU Ticket Manager Cindy Bell said, the university has enlisted the help of local businesses to fill the house.

"We'll suggest that maybe it would be nice for them to have an employee appreciation day at the game," she said. "It's not huge blocks of tickets we try to sell off, maybe just 20 or 30. Usually the

businesses are happy to do it."

NU also has had to contend with declining student-ticket sales, which have dropped from about 15,000 in the early 1980s to the current 7,000.

"It always seems someone is there to pick up the slack," Ms. Bell said.

Head Coach Tom Osborne said he is most impressed by the fans' loyalty.

"It's pretty amazing in view of the fact that even for games like Pacific — games people aren't real enthused about — they still come," said Osborne, referring to NU's 70-21 rout of the University of the Pacific

on Sept. 24.

"For a lot of Nebraskans," Osborne said, "Nebraska football has become somewhat of a tradition, in some cases a social event and in some cases just the thing to do. I'm surprised and somewhat amazed that we've had sellout after sellout for so many years."

Playing winning football apparently is one key to maintaining a sellout streak.

The schools with the second- and third-longest sellout streaks, Michigan and Notre Dame, are traditional college football powers, as is Nebraska. An example of a declining power is Oklahoma, which has not had a sellout in 28 games, since the Colorado game in 1989. Before that, the Sooners had sold out 86 of their previous 99 games.

The Sooners' longest sellout streak, 69 games, ended with the 1984 season opener.

The people who flood Memorial Stadium with the "Sea of Red" on Saturdays come from every corner of Nebraska. Byrne calls it a "big family reunion."

Osborne said he also likes the crowd's friendly demeanor, which has its pros and cons.

"If I were to take a team into a sold-out stadium," he said, "this is the place I wouldn't mind coming. I've never felt the intensity level was real high. It's a fairly friendly crowd. That's OK. We haven't tried to work at getting it all steamed up."

"But we're hopeful that they'll be more emotional this week."

Willard Waldo has seen them all.

Bill Brestel would have, too, if it hadn't been for an ice storm two years ago. And Ted Doyle would have if it hadn't been for a business meeting he was required to attend some 20 years ago.

The three are among 483 people who have held tickets for all 200 games or, in some cases, for many more. All have been invited to a "Been There for 200" party in the north fieldhouse before Saturday's 11:08 a.m. kickoff.

Waldo, 82, never has let illness or a family function keep him out of his 50-yard-line seats on a game day.

"Nothing ever interferes with a football game," declared Waldo, a semiretired swine breeder and former state senator from DeWitt, Neb.

Waldo said he hasn't missed a home game since 1940.

"In Nebraska we sometimes fight like cats and dogs on some things," Waldo said, "but almost to the person we're behind Nebraska football. I hope the day doesn't come for a long time that they don't have a sellout."

Waldo said he started going to games as a show of



JEFF  
BEIERMANN



support for his alma mater.

"I graduated from the agriculture college," he said, "and what I learned helped me become a better farmer. I've been trying to repay them for all they gave me in my college days."

Brestel, of Chappell, Neb., never went to college, but he said he always has felt a tie to the university. On many autumn Friday nights in the 1940s, after playing football games for Chappell High, Brestel would hop on a bus bound for Lincoln.

"I'd sleep in the bus, then in the Lincoln depot, and then I'd go over to the stadium," said Brestel, 69, a retired cafe and gas station owner. "You could walk right up and buy a ticket, and then they'd send you right up into the balcony."

"Right at kickoff, it was like a waterfall. Everybody would come down to the front row."

Brestel once was the football program's goodwill ambassador in western Nebraska. He swung a deal with A.J. Lewandowski, the head coach in 1943 and '44 and later the ticket manager, to sell 100 tickets a week out of his roadside business near Big Springs.

"I don't think any of the administration knew what was going on," Brestel said, "but I sold a lot of tickets for two or three years."

Brestel and his wife, JoLettah, still make the 646-mile round trip to Lincoln every Saturday there's a home game. The only exception was two years ago, when an ice storm stopped them 40 miles east of Chappell.

Doyle, a retired fertilizer salesman from Fairbury, Neb., said he has seen all but one game since 1948. His one absence was the result of a mandatory business meeting.

"I suppose I'll keep going to games as long as I can waddle up to my seat," said Doyle, a tackle for the Huskers in the 1930s and later a professional player for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Though he's 80, no adverse weather conditions can keep Doyle out of his seat.

"I've always got a heavy coat," he said.

The sellout streak has not gone unnoticed by the players. Senior Ed Stewart, the starting weakside linebacker from Chicago, said Nebraskans' love for football became evident to him soon after he arrived on campus.

"It's a way of life," Stewart said. "It seems like everything is upbeat until football season lets out, then things just die down. It's always a special feeling to look up and see all those people in red cheering and screaming for us."

Starting offensive tackle Rob Zatechka said he may have taken the streak for granted early in his college career. Having grown up in Lincoln, where he attended East High School, Zatechka was accustomed to the

statewide migration of fans to Memorial Stadium.

But once he started playing for the Huskers, his perspective changed.

"When you get down here," he said, "you see places where they don't have the fan support, a place like Iowa State or Oklahoma State."

"It was really drilled into me last year at Okie State. We went down there for a nationally televised game, they were 3-1 and they had one of the best defenses in the nation, and they couldn't even fill up a 55,000-seat stadium."

"When you see something like that, it shows how mind-boggling our streak is."

Husker fans don't show up en masse just for home games. As many as 12,000 have showed up for road games against Big Eight Conference opponents. The team has a national reputation for "traveling well," the parlance of bowl officials for schools with a large fan following.

After this year's game at Kansas State, the players acknowledged the red-clad fans for their support during the hard-earned 17-6 victory. They did the same after last week's 42-7 win at Missouri.

Stewart, who initiated the show of appreciation, said he hopes he started a tradition at road games.

"I just saw all of our fans," he said, "and I thought it was important to wave at them and let them know we're glad they came out. It only takes a couple of minutes to throw a hand up and let them know we're glad they're there."

How long can the streak continue? Indefinitely, Byrne says, or until the football program starts losing consistently. That has happened during only one era — the 1940s and some years in the '50s.

"If we stink," Byrne said, "I don't think people will come out and support us."

Devaney said he thought the streak was on the brink in 1968, when the Huskers were 2-3 at home and 6-4 overall.

"It looked like we might go downhill at that point," he said, "but we came back to win nine games the next year and went to a bowl. Things looked up after that."

Like Byrne, Devaney said the streak is in no danger unless losses start piling up.

"The people would be very disappointed," Devaney said, "but I don't think it would affect the attendance for a year or two after the losing started."

"But none of that is going to happen as long as Tom is coaching here."

Stewart, the linebacker, sees no end in sight, either.

"The way it's been going for 200," he said, "I think it can go for 200 more."





JEFF BUNDY

Brenden Stai, blocking for Brook Berringer against Colorado, was one of four seniors on Nebraska's offensive line. Their position coach, Milt Tenopir, called it the best group he has coached in 21 years on the Husker staff. The other seniors are tackles Rob Zatechka and Zach Wiegert and guard Joel Wilks.

## NU SENIORS CAP VINTAGE CLIMB

BY ERIC OLSON

**NOV. 4** — At the time, there really was nothing special about the Nebraska football recruiting classes in 1990 and '91.

Coach Tom Osborne's synopsis of the '91 class: "I don't think it's overwhelming."

Though Osborne was more optimistic about the '90 class, recruiting analyst Allen Wallace, among others, rated it far out of the national top 10. At 1 p.m. Saturday at Memorial Stadium, many of the players who became Nebraska Cornhuskers those years will play Kansas in their final home game. What the members of the NU football senior class of 1994 have accomplished in their four or five seasons, depending on whether they took a redshirt year, exceeds the initial expectations.

If they beat Kansas, Iowa State and Oklahoma to

finish the season, they'll be assured of becoming the fourth NU senior class to win or share four straight Big Eight championships.

The seniors take a four-year record of 38-6-1 into the KU game. They're 23-1-1 in Big Eight play, their only conference loss being the 19-10 upset at Iowa State in 1992. And they're 24-1 at home, the only loss coming to Washington, 36-21, in a 1991 game in which few of them played.

"I don't think we were noted as a great recruiting class," defensive tackle Terry Connealy said, "but we've put in a lot of hours in the weight room, on the practice field and watching film, and it has really paid off. It was a small price to pay for the success we've had."

Holding the Nos. 1 and 2 rankings in the major polls, the seniors have a shot at doing what only those on the teams of 1970 and '71 have done — win the national championship.

"We can do it, too," cornerback Barron Miles said. "We're hungry."

Osborne said the seniors, who started out as just another recruiting class, will go down as a group to re-



member.

"They've represented us well off the field," he said. "We have academic All-Americans, like Terry Connealy and Rob Zatechka, and Barron Miles and Eddie Stewart were great players, and then there are guys like (Brenden) Stai, (Zach) Wiegert, Cory Schlesinger ...

"That's a pretty significant group when you look at what they've been able to do."

Zatechka, the starting left offensive tackle, said he thinks the seniors will leave a lasting impact.

All was not good in the Nebraska program before the 1991 season, Zatechka said. The year before, the Huskers had lost two of their last three regular-season games, then were clobbered 45-21 by Georgia Tech in the Florida Citrus Bowl.

"There was a lot of dissension on the team," Zatechka said. "We hadn't had a lot of success on the national level, people were harping on us about having a weak schedule and losing games. There were a lot of individuals around here."

The players decided then that it was time for change, Zatechka said.

"I don't think the program was making a spiral," he said, "but attitude-wise, I think we had hit a plateau. So we made a big commitment to team unity, playing together and playing for each other rather than anybody else."

"I saw it as our class that made the turnaround."

Miles agreed. He remembered when he arrived on campus, academically ineligible to practice or play, and felt isolated. In the past two or three years, he said, an effort has been made to make freshmen feel welcome immediately.

"When I got here," he said, "you were left by yourself. If you didn't talk to a coach about your problems, you didn't talk to anybody unless you knew somebody before you got here."

That family atmosphere, Miles said, also exists off the football field.

"The seniors involve the younger players in their activities," he said. "If someone younger needs to, you let him hang out with you."

As Saturday's game approaches, mixed feelings abound.

"It's definitely going to be a special moment," said weakside linebacker Ed Stewart, a team co-captain. "It will be a

moment of excitement and maybe a little bit of sadness because we realize this is the last time we're going to go out on that field in front of all those people dressed in red."

Just before last week's game against Colorado, Zatechka said, he realized that his college career was winding down.

"The seniors were talking about how we've never lost to Colorado, how we've never lost to Kansas. We lost to Iowa State, but that doesn't count. You start talking about all that, and I get choked up."

"The thought of running out there Saturday for my last home game is a scary thought. But it's something I'm looking forward to like I've never looked forward to anything in my life. So much has happened since I came here."



BILL BATSON

**Brook Berringer, who entered the season with 13 career carries and 29 passes, guided the Huskers to eight straight wins. He finished the regular season with a completion percentage of 62.3, the best by an NU starter since Craig Sundberg hit 63.1 percent in 1984.**





RUDY SMITH

Brook Berringer won high praise from rival coaches, including Jim Walden of Iowa State. "He's giving them a passing game," Walden said. "They tried to do it with Frazier ... but I don't think he's a great Saturday passer. I think Berringer is."

## BERRINGER SILENCES CRITICS

BY ERIC OLSON

**NOV. 9** — Brook Berringer said all along that he could do it, but few believed him. When it became apparent a month ago that Berringer would be Nebraska's starting quarterback, because of Tommie Frazier's blood-clot problems, the Huskers were all but written off as national-championship contenders.

The naysayers asked how a guy who had seen little more than mop-up duty could do a credible job replacing a three-year starter who had been touted as a Heisman Trophy candidate.

But Berringer has answered his critics. Now they're turning into believers.

Berringer is 5-0 as the starter, including a convincing 24-7 win over Colorado and a 45-17 dismantling of Kansas last week that vaulted unbeaten Nebraska to

the consensus No. 1 rating in college football.

Berringer also has won some ringing endorsements.

From Iowa State Coach Jim Walden: "What he's doing is he's giving them a passing game. They tried to do it with Frazier ... but I don't think he's a great Saturday passer. I think Berringer is."

From Missouri Coach Larry Smith: "He compares with some of the best you've had there. He's an extremely fine thrower, but he's still able to run some of the option, enough to keep you honest. He has stepped in there and done a wonderful job."

From Kansas State Coach Bill Snyder: "He can handle some phases of the game that other people may have felt were germane only to Tommie Frazier, and with the play-action that Nebraska uses, he's becoming a very well-balanced and diverse quarterback."

Berringer, a junior out of Goodland, Kan., takes the praise the same way he took last month's negative



comments from the national press and television commentators.

"If a guy let something like that go to his head," he said, "it could cost him."

But, Berringer allows, it's nice to hear some compliments for a change.

"I feel like I'm getting some respect," he said. That respect has been hard-earned. He came into the season with only 13 rushing and 29 passing attempts in two seasons as a backup. He prepped for the starter's job by taking most of the snaps Sept. 24 in the 70-21 thrashing of Pacific.

The next week, an admittedly nervous Berringer met the press as the Huskers' new starting quarterback.

"At the beginning I didn't have anything to talk about," he said. "All I could do was say I'm confident and that I can get the job done. Now that I've gone out and proved it, and don't have to eat my words, I can go out there and have some fun with it. I'm having the time of my life."

There have been some rough spots, though. He suffered a partially collapsed lung against Wyoming but played the whole game. He started the next week's game against Oklahoma State, but X-rays at halftime showed a recurrence.

Sophomore walk-on Matt Turman started against Kansas State, but Berringer relieved in the second half and has shown no lingering effects of the injury since. His 13-of-18 passing performance for a career-high 267 yards and two touchdowns against Kansas highlighted a three-game stretch in which Berringer completed 70.8 percent of his attempts (34 of 48 with one interception) for 561 yards and six TDs. For the season, Berringer is 70 of 110 for 936 yards, with nine touchdowns and three interceptions. If he can maintain his 63.6-percent completion rate, he would set an NU season record. This week Berringer took over the top spot on the Big Eight season passing chart with a 156.7 efficiency rating. Berringer ranks ahead of ballyhooed passers such as Chad May of Kansas State and Kordell Stewart of Colorado, but he doesn't have enough attempts to qualify for the national chart.

Don't look for the Huskers to go to an all-out passing attack with Berringer at quarterback, though. Coach Tom Osborne said this week that option football remains the offense's staple — and Berringer wouldn't want it any other way.

"I would rather run more options, actually, as long as we throw the ball, too," he said. Walden, whose ISU team plays host to the Huskers at 1 p.m. Saturday, said Berringer's passing ability has made NU more diverse.

"In some ways, as the weeks go by," Walden said, "you'll find Nebraska is going to be tougher to defense than they were when Frazier was there."

None of Berringer's success has come as a surprise to Turner Gill, who coaches NU's quarterbacks. "Last year I may have been more surprised if he had played well," Gill said. "This year I expected it for him. He has all the tools to be a great quarterback."

It just took longer for the 6-foot-4, 210-pound Berringer to show off those tools.

"At a major college like this, with as much athletic ability as there is, all a guy needs is a chance," he said. "Some get their chance early, some don't. I didn't have a chance to show people what I could do right off the bat."

Berringer said his numbers aren't a fluke.

A lot of people say I've improved," he said. "I don't think I have."

Though Berringer didn't have much game experience coming into this season, Osborne said, he had been tested.

"He's been here four years in our system," Osborne said, "and he's an accomplished player. A lot of times people kind of discount practice. But we go out and scrimmage one of the best defenses in the country. He has taken a lot of snaps against good people."

Berringer said he is enjoying all the things that go with being the starting quarterback at Nebraska. He's getting more requests for speaking engagements, his mailbag has been full and he can't go out to eat without being interrupted for autograph signing.

"I love it," he said. "I remember when I was little how much I looked up to athletes, even the high school quarterback, and I would have killed for an autograph if I hadn't been so shy. I think it's important to give the little guys and the other fans the respect they deserve."

The only downside, he said, has been having to get an unlisted phone number. Calls would come as early as 6 a.m. some days, he said.

The fanfare and success on the field have made the starting quarterback's job everything Berringer had hoped for.

There has been lighthearted talk that a quarterback controversy looms next spring when Frazier comes back. Berringer can't discount the possibility.

"I never set a goal to be a backup quarterback," he said. "I'm not happy being No. 2, and I'll never be happy with No. 2."

For now, that's something he doesn't have to worry about.





KILEY CHRISTIAN

Zach Wiegert, left, and Brenden Stai became the fourth pair of offensive line teammates to make All-America. Said ABC's Keith Jackson: "Zach Wiegert and Brenden Stai are about as good as anybody I've seen in the last decade."

## DEMOLITION CREW

*NU Offensive Linemen Blast Apart Defense*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**NOV. 10** — In 21 years as Nebraska's offensive line coach, Milt Tenopir has tutored 38 all-conference players, 14 All-Americans, three Outland Trophy winners and two Lombardi honorees.

But out of all that talent, Tenopir said Wednesday, he has never seen one offensive line play as well as the current group of right tackle Zach Wiegert, right guard Brenden Stai, alternate centers Aaron Graham and Bill Humphrey, left guard Joel Wilks and left tackle Rob Zatechka.

"We've still got some season left, so I say this guardedly," Tenopir said. "But right now there is no doubt in my mind that these six guys — with an occasional swing tackle or guard — are performing better

as an overall unit than any we've had."

In nearly 800 snaps this season, the offensive line has allowed only four sacks and been called for holding twice. And even though the Huskers — because of injuries — have used three starting quarterbacks, they lead the country in rushing (365.9 yards), rank third in total offense (495.4) and are fourth in scoring (39.4 points).

"We've had kind of a mixed bag because of the injuries," Tenopir said. "Our running game was wide-open early with the option game. Then we had a few games where we had to crank it down and just pound it."

In a 17-6 road victory against Top 15 foe Kansas State, 40 of Nebraska's 61 offensive plays went between the tackles.

"That's a grueling way to play," Tenopir said. "But our guys did it. They have accepted every challenge and moved on."

The offensive line had its highest combined grade of the season last week against Kansas, Tenopir said.



The previous high grade had been the week before against Colorado.

"There hasn't been a ball game yet that they haven't done something a little better than the week before," Tenopir said. "They are taking each play and going at it with the idea that it could be the one that pops for a biggie.

"These guys are playing more recklessly and free than earlier in the year because they are so sure of what they are doing. And it thrills us as coaches to watch game tape because we can feel the fun they are having."

Other people have been watching tape of Nebraska's front line, too.

"As you talk to other coaches during the season," Tenopir said, "you hear a lot of complimentary things being said about our line. You never know if they are blowing smoke or not, but I suspect they are being sincere.

"We particularly hear a lot from other coaches about Zach and Brenden. Those two have the ability to catch your eye because they are so nimble and they can get into the open field and take people on."

Longtime ABC play-by-play announcer Keith Jackson, while working Nebraska romps over UCLA and Colorado, noticed the rumble caused by that pair of 6-foot-5, 300-pounders.

"Zach Wiegert and Brenden Stai are about as good as anybody I've seen in the last decade," Jackson said.

But where might Wiegert and Stai rank over the past 40 to 50 years?

Since 1950, according to NCAA records, only three pairs of offensive linemen from a school have been chosen as consensus first-team All-Americans in the same season. Ohio State's Kurt Schumacher and Steve Myers did it in 1974. Michigan's Ed Muransky and Kurt Becker did it in 1981. And Southern Cal's Don Mosebar and Bruce Matthews did it in 1982.

Tenopir said Wiegert and Stai are good enough to make first-team All-American this season.

"I don't think there is any question," he said. "If you look at what they've actually done on the field — forget the hype — it's really kind of amazing the year those two are having.

"It's a pretty strong statement, but they've handled everything they've faced. When either of them has gotten in any difficulty, it was technique and not anything physical or athletic.

"As a pair, they are as good as we've had since I've been here. They are what you are looking for in a lineman — both are big, strong and very agile. And there just isn't hardly anything they do wrong."

Wiegert has been the most high-profile lineman at Nebraska this season.

The senior from Fremont, Neb., was ABC's player of the game against UCLA. And he was the Huskers' nominee Sunday for Big Eight player of the week after grading out to a perfect 2.0 against Kansas.

"That maybe happened sometime before in my 33 years here," Nebraska Head Coach Tom Osborne said. "But I can't remember anybody playing 65 or 70 plays and having a perfect grade at that level.

"Zach knocked a lot of people down and had a great game — one of the finest we've ever had an offensive lineman have."

Wiegert, one of four Lombardi finalists, has started 34 straight games and played in 43 in his career.

He has allowed one sack in four years and this season is averaging 9.7 knockdown blocks a game.

Stai, a senior from Yorba Linda, Calif., has received little attention by comparison. But Nebraska learned last year of the value of his 525-pound bench press.

In the seven games Stai played before breaking his leg, NU averaged 303 yards rushing a game. In the four games he missed, the average dropped 41 yards.

"Brenden's a great player," Wiegert said. "I can't see any reason why we both can't be All-American. If there is a better right tackle and right guard combination out there, I'd like to meet them."

Stai said backing up 1992 Outland Trophy winner Will Shields for a year and now playing in the shadow of Wiegert hasn't bothered him.

"I'm glad Zach gets all the attention," he said. "I just enjoy playing next to him.

"I know a lot of hard-working players go unnoticed. But the guys who do get some attention usually get it for the right reasons — for being good, sound players.

"It's up to the voters, but if we both made All-American it would be great."

When Tenopir was interviewed for this story, the talk had to be moved out of his office because linemen were there on their own time watching film. When the required film sessions start, Tenopir said, little needs to be discussed.

"I don't have to point out something they could have done better," he said. "They already know. I can hear them grunting and grumbling about it in the back of the room.

"These guys have really impressed me so far in taking an analytical approach to the game in films and then working so hard in practice. I'll be disappointed if they don't continue with the same focus."

Tenopir said his linemen have no nickname or attention-grabbing slogans. And they aren't seeking any.

"We're just the O-Line," he said. "That's good enough."



## NU'S COVER MAN

Big-Play Miles Draws Pro Scouts' Interest

BY ERIC OLSON

**NOV. 20** — Ask Nebraska cornerback Barron Miles how good his season has been, and he'll look for the nearest piece of wood to knock on before answering.

"All it takes is one bad play, and that's what most of the fans and everyone else remembers," he said. "I haven't made that terrible play yet, so ..."

Well, if Miles won't come out and say it, Secondary Coach George Darlington will.

"From blocked kicks to dominant play as a defensive back, he's been tremendous for us," he said. "We've talked to a number of pro scouts who are extremely excited about him."

At 5 feet 8 and 165 pounds, Miles is on the small side for a prototype NFL cornerback. But the Thorpe Award candidate's athleticism, featuring a 33-inch vertical jump and 4.6-second 40-yard dash time, allows Miles to make up for that shortcoming.

And he's backed up by statistics.

The senior is the Big Eight co-leader in interceptions with four, double his career total entering the season. He owns the single-season school record for pass breakups with 10. And he's within three of the career record of 19, shared by three players.

Miles also has blocked a school career-record six kicks, three in 1993 and three in '94. Five of those kicks were punts, the other was a field goal.

"I think he'll be drafted," Darlington said, "and whichever team gets him will have a jewel because he'll do so many things for them. He'll make a club and be a real contributor, not only as a defensive back, but as a kick blocker and potentially as a return man."

When he came to Nebraska from Roselle, N.J., in 1991, Miles never would have figured to compile such a list of accomplishments on the defensive side of the ball.

He wanted to play quarterback — his main position in high school.

"It took a while getting used to the idea that I wouldn't be playing there," he said. "I guess it's every high school quarterback's dream to at least get a shot at it in college."

But Darlington said Miles was dreaming if he thought he was going to play anyplace other than defensive back.

"He was never considered for anything else — ever," Darlington said. "We weren't going to allow him to come if he had any idea of playing quarterback."

As it turned out, Miles was a natural at defensive back. He had showed signs of it on his high school team, where he doubled as a free safety.

"I only played there because I could react to the ball without being coached," he said.

Miles obviously has become a refined cornerback at Nebraska. But there are times, he admits, when he can't resist falling back on his natural instincts.

"You play the proper technique, but at times when the ball is in the air, you just have to say 'Forget it' and go for the ball," Miles said.

He was referring to the widely discussed technique that requires a defensive back to avoid looking back for the ball when covering a receiver in man-to-man defense. The exception to the rule is when the defender has the receiver "pinned" and is in "dominant position" as they run along the sideline.

"I understand why coaches say to do it that way," he said. "But sometimes you're looking at film and think to yourself, 'Dang, if I had just turned around, I could have picked it.'"

"But you do run faster when you're not looking back, so I understand. But if I'm a step from (the receiver), I'm going to have to take that chance. If it doesn't work and he scores, it's a double minus for me."

For the most part, all has been positive for Miles in his 35 games for the Huskers. His play began attracting attention last season, when he was named to the coaches' All-Big Eight first team.

Among his 1993 highlights were making an interception and breaking up five passes against Colorado; holding UCLA All-America receiver J.J. Stokes to six catches for 65 yards despite giving up nine inches in height; and blocking a punt in the end zone and smothering it for a touchdown against Oklahoma State. Miles' best outing this season came Oct. 15 at Kansas State, when he broke up a school-record six passes and made five tackles. The effort earned him Athlon national defensive player-of-the-week honors.

He also blocked two punts Sept. 24 against Pacific and picked off two passes against Wyoming. Miles is the most experienced player in a Nebraska secondary whose image has undergone a change for the better in recent years. For that, Miles credits the switch two years ago to a defense that emphasizes speed rather than bulk.

The Huskers ranked first last week in the Big Eight and 14th nationally in pass efficiency defense.

"We've got to thank the rush defense and the guys who put pressure on the quarterback," Miles said. "The way they play, we don't have to cover receivers as long."

But, Miles said, it would be unrealistic to think he and his secondary teammates are leak-proof.

"Fans expect no one to catch a ball on you, but that's impossible in this day and age," he said. "There's no defensive back who can shut down a receiver every time."





JEFF BEIERMAN

Troy Dumas savors the Huskers' win over Miami. "Troy is a big-timer," said his position coach, Tony Samuel. "Somebody in the NFL is bound to look at him and say, 'Whoa!'"

## JOB SWITCH A BLESSING TO DUMAS

BY ERIC OLSON

**NOV. 24** — A year ago, Troy Dumas' football career was going nowhere.

Playing free safety, Dumas felt lost and miserable. At 6 feet 4 and 225 pounds, he found it wasn't easy chasing 5-8, 160-pound speedsters around the sec-

ondary.

But he didn't understand his feelings or why he couldn't always get the job done for Nebraska.

"I can't believe how uncomfortable I was with it all," he said.

When Secondary Coach George Darlington broached the subject of a position change, Dumas tuned him out. After all, Dumas had been a safety since he started playing football.

Darlington pressed, though. Moving Dumas to linebacker would be consistent with the Huskers' em-



phasis on speed in their 4-3 defense.

Still Dumas resisted.

But by the week of the Oklahoma game, after injuries to Ernie Beler and Lorenzo Brinkley decimated the strongside linebacker spot, he had no choice. Dumas, in retrospect, said it was a blessing in disguise.

He told me playing linebacker was going to be my best shot and get me farther than playing safety," Dumas said. "I have to thank him for telling me what was best for me. I can honestly say he was looking out for my best interests."

Now Dumas' once-stagnant career is upward bound. The senior from Cheyenne, Wyo., is the Huskers' fourth-leading tackler and Monday was named to The Associated Press' All-Big Eight first-team defense.

Friday, when the top-ranked Huskers face Oklahoma in a 1:34 p.m. game at Norman, Okla., Dumas will truly celebrate his first anniversary as a strongside linebacker. In last year's 21-7 victory over the Sooners, he made six tackles in his first start at the position.

"I was just thinking about it the other day, about how much progress I've made," he said.

He said it isn't going too far to say that the move saved his career. If he had stayed at safety, he probably would have had to compete for playing time with touted sophomore Mike Minter. Dumas said if Minter had stayed healthy — he suffered a season-ending knee injury against Texas Tech — he probably would have had a hard time beating out Minter.

"I probably would be sitting on the bench," he said. "I wouldn't be sitting here on the first team All-Big Eight or have been a preseason Butkus Award candidate."

"I'd just be another number, I guess."

Playing linebacker showcases Dumas' athleticism. He has a 1.54-second time in the 10-yard dash and a 36-inch vertical jump.

His explosiveness allows him to do what he does best — stop the run. But as an old free safety, he also is more than capable of using his coverage skills. But instead of having to make a habit of shadowing smaller and faster receivers, he gets to do it against tight ends.

Dumas said he's never been happier. "Somebody's looking out for me somewhere," he said. "I'm pretty lucky to be in the situation I'm in."

Dumas, who sat out the Oklahoma State game because of a knee injury, made a season-high 10 of his 57 tackles this season against UCLA. He has one forced fumble, against Wyoming, and one interception. The pickoff stopped a Kansas State drive deep into

Nebraska territory and protected a 7-6 lead in a game the Huskers won 17-6.

Dumas' play in the short time he's been at strongside linebacker prompts Outside Linebackers Coach Tony Samuel to gush.

"Troy is a big-timer," Samuel said. "If I had him for two or three years, boy."

"He's still learning. I wish he had been around earlier. I wish he had another year, too."

"Somebody in the NFL is bound to look at him and say, 'Whoa.'"

Weakside linebacker Ed Stewart, a Butkus Award finalist, knows what Dumas has gone through. Stewart switched from strong safety to linebacker in 1991.

"Making a move like Troy did can be as difficult as you want to make it," Stewart said. "You can sit there and moan and groan about it, or you can accept it and try to accomplish some things."

"Playing linebacker is totally different from playing safety. People are coming at you from all over. For just being a linebacker a year, Troy has made tremendous strides."

The new position has given Dumas a fresh outlook on football.

Instead of moping, as he said he did at times last year, he has everything to play for — a possible national championship and career in pro football.

"I buckled down and told myself I'm not going to have another bad season," he said. "Ninety-nine percent of what happened in the past was my fault. I wasn't physically getting it done, so that affected me mentally."

Dumas said he'll have no problem getting emotionally ready for the Oklahoma game. The NU-OU series has been one of his favorites since he was in junior high school in Cheyenne.

"At that time, I was an Oklahoma fan," he said. "It was a big part of Thanksgiving for me. I really liked Jamelle Holieway when he was playing. Now that I play for Nebraska, it adds a little more excitement to it for the fact that I grew up watching it."

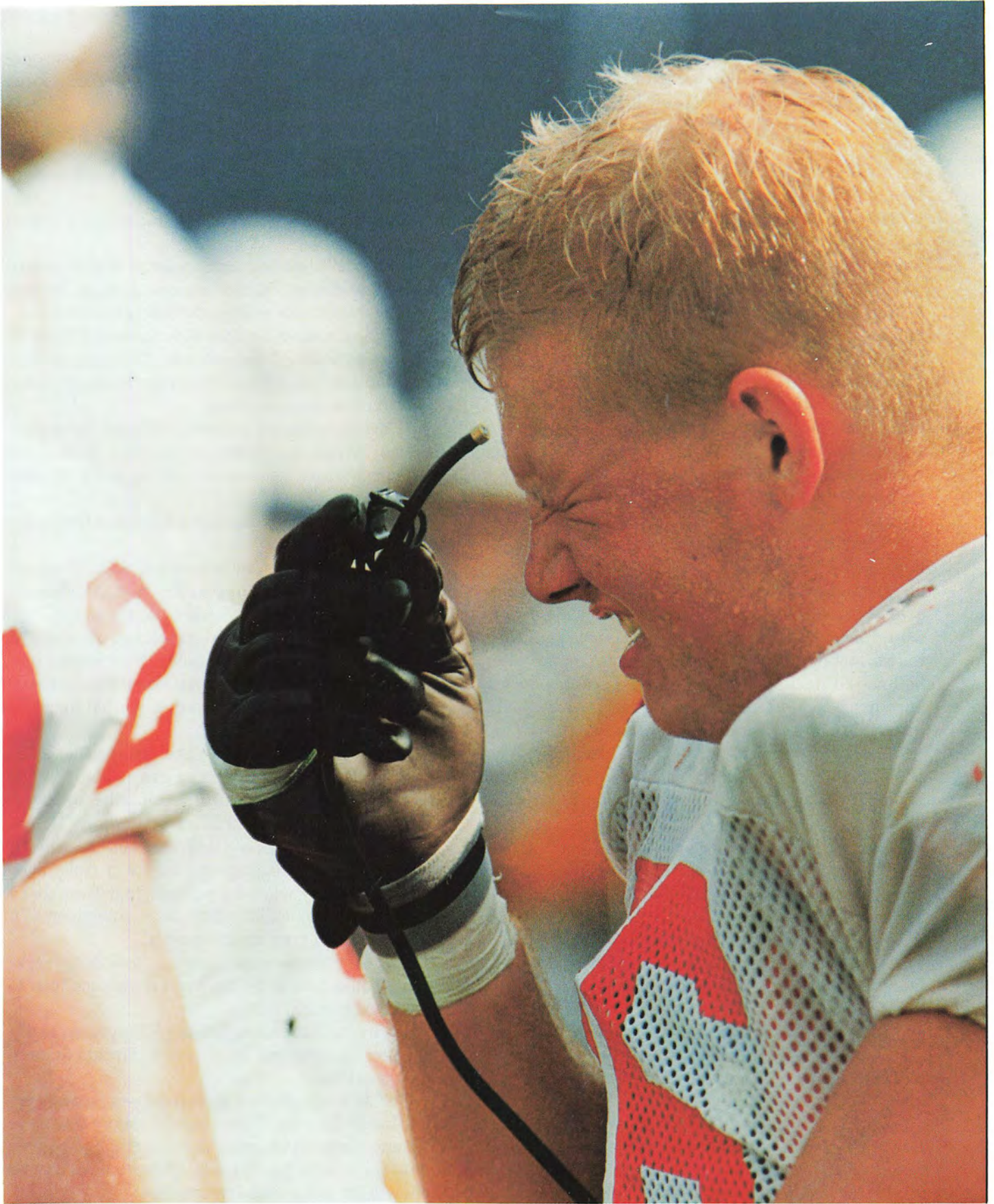
The game means even more this year. A Nebraska victory would put the Huskers in the Orange Bowl to play for the national title.

Getting back to Miami became NU's goal immediately after last season's 18-16 loss to Florida State in the Orange Bowl.

"We've accomplished everything we want to accomplish," he said. "Everybody talks about the Colorado game being important, but this one is more important if we're going to do what we have to, and that's win the national championship."

"We want it so much that it hurts."





Guard Joel Wilks cools off on the sideline. The temperature approached 100 degrees on the field, and the humidity topped 50 percent. It looked like the heat was really bothering them," NU tackle Rob Zatechka said. They were slow coming out of the huddle, and they weren't coming off the ball very hard."





**NEBRASKA 31**  
**W. VIRGINIA 0**

A u g u s t 2 8 , 1 9 9 4

# A SIZZLING START

*FRAZIER, DEFENSE HELP HUSKERS  
WALLOP WEST VIRGINIA*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.**—A good start for a team that plans on doing something great. That's how Nebraska coaches and players assessed a 31-0 thumping of West Virginia in the 12th Kickoff Classic, the third time the Huskers have won the opening game of the college football season.

Before a crowd of 58,233 at Giants Stadium — including an estimated 12,000 raucous rooters in red — third- and fourth-ranked NU offered the following performances for the other 106 teams in Division I-A to consider:

— A defense that posted NU's first shutout since a 55-0 whipping of Oklahoma State 20 games ago in 1992. The Blackshirts and their backups held 23rd- and 24th-ranked West Virginia to 89 total yards, the fewest since they limited Iowa State to 53 yards 113 games ago in 1984. WVU's 8 rushing yards were the fewest since Colorado's 8-yard day 18 games ago in 1992.

"We think we can have a great defense," NU Coach Tom Osborne said. "And to be a great football team, you've got to have a great defense."

— An award-winning showing by Tommie Frazier, who accounted for 230 total yards and had a hand in all four touchdowns. The junior from Bradenton, Fla., became the ninth quarterback to be voted the most

JEFF BUNDY

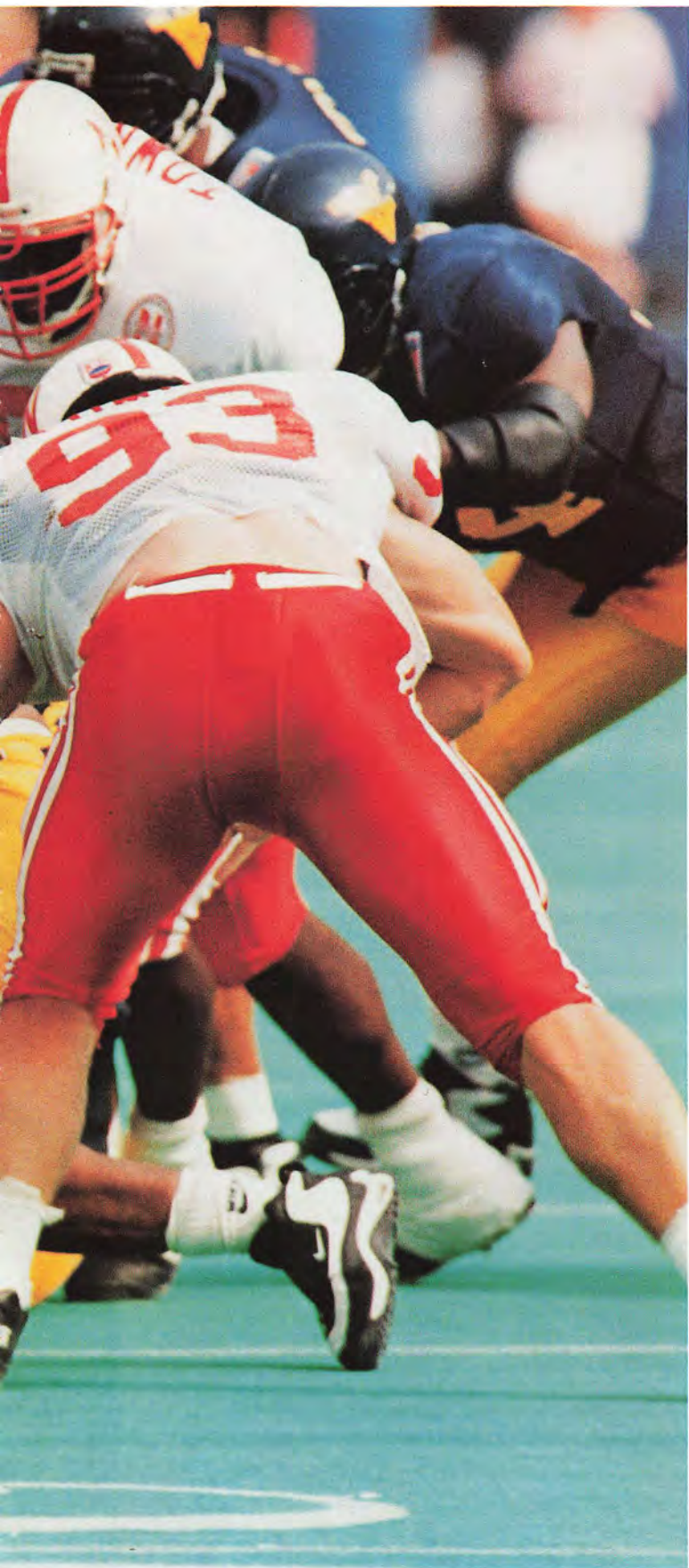
CHAMPIONS





Doug Colman, left, Ed Stewart and Jared Tomich gang tackle West Virginia running back Kantroy Barber. The Huskers held the Mountaineers to 8 yards rushing and 89 total, their best showing since the 1984 Iowa State game.





PHIL JOHNSON

valuable player at the Kickoff Classic, and the third from Nebraska, joining Turner Gill in 1983 and Steve Taylor in 1988. Frazier's showing sparked questions about the Heisman Trophy. "I'm not worried about the Heisman right now," said Frazier, who shook off a third-quarter blow to his throwing shoulder. "All I'm worried about is winning week in and week out. If the Heisman comes, I'll be happy. But if it doesn't, I'll be happy as long as our team wins."

— A 100-yard rushing day for I-back Lawrence Phillips in his first career start. The sophomore from West Covina, Calif., gained 126 yards in 24 carries before resting in the fourth quarter.

— And for local flavor, three Huskers from New Jersey made big contributions. Middle linebacker Doug Colman had eight tackles and recovered a fumble that set up a touchdown. Cornerback Barron Miles intercepted a pass. And nose tackle Christian Peter had seven tackles.

"I had 106 friends and family here," said Colman, a junior from Ventnor, N.J. "There were tears in my eyes as I boarded the bus. This was an ideal game for me."

Not everything worked out perfectly for Nebraska. The Huskers committed five turnovers, the most since they lost the ball seven times in a 1990 loss 38 games ago to Oklahoma. Two wide-open receivers dropped passes near the goal line. One was intercepted. The other appeared to be a sure touchdown. And there were six penalties and a few blown assignments.

But the negatives weren't enough to keep Nebraska fans from showering the end zone with oranges after the first touchdown. The fruit toss caused the press box announcer to say, "We have flags on the play." After a pause, he said, "Excuse, me, those were oranges."

Having fans go wild is OK with NU defensive tackle Terry Connealy. "The fans always get pretty excited, which I like to see," he said. "But that's only the first game of the year. It's not even September yet. We don't want this to go to our heads. And we don't want to take anybody for granted. The fellas realize we've got a chance to have a real good team. They'll do whatever it takes to keep improving."





PHIL JOHNSON

Tom Sieler scores Nebraska's first points of the season with a 32-yard field goal. Sieler, who tried short field goals for the Huskers, was 4 of 6 for the season.





*Tom Shatel...*

## NU DELIVERS ON THE STAGE

**EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.**—Start spreadin' the news.

These boys are good. Very good. This is not necessarily stop-the-press material in Grand Island or Valentine. But nearby in the city that never sleeps, where you're only as good as your last show, the critics were holding off on the confirmation of Nebraska football until Sunday's matinee in the Meadowlands was complete.

The reviews are in. Read all about it: Huskers are for real. Very for real.

The world was wondering. This new image was at stake. National magazines had proclaimed that the Huskers had returned. ESPN's "Sports Reporters" gushed so much over Tom Osborne on Sunday morning that you wondered if maybe Nebraska hadn't hired that other genius, Bill Walsh of Stanford.

But what have you won for me lately?

That was the question Sunday. While some people are willing to give Nebraska a free pass to Respect, others were waiting to see if that was a mirage in Miami playing against Florida State last January. Surely, the players at Free Shoes University were distracted by their agents. Go figure. In the Associated Press poll, for instance, Nebraska began at fourth despite having the most No. 1 votes (18) in the poll. Reason: Several voters picked NU ninth or 10th.

That was why Sunday's game was bigger than Zach Wiegert. The Huskers, 17-point favorites, were expected to deliver. And afterward, not even their biggest critic could complain.

"We played well," Osborne said. "If you're optimistic about Nebraska, fine, we'll go along with that."

Good. Very good.

It was written in black and white: Nebraska dominated in rushing (368 yards to 8), total yards (468 to 89), average gain (6.1 to 1.6), return yards (152 to 10) and first

downs (28 to 9). It was as obvious as the sight of Mountaineer defenders calling time out because they were bent over, coughing at the turf.

In the second quarter.

Thumbs up to the offensive line for making this one a drive down the Jersey turnpike. Thumbs up to sophomore I-back Lawrence Phillips, who already has some people asking, "Calvin who?" Thumbs up to Reggie Baul, who in one game answered a crucial question about this team: Does it have a big-play receiver?

Yes.

Two thumbs up to Tommie Frazier, who proved Sunday he has impeccable timing. Put him on the national stage and he keeps getting standing O's. Frazier combined for 230 yards and four touchdowns and wowed a collective group of Heisman voters in the press box who didn't seem to mind a handful of sloppy plays, including two interceptions



Donta Jones bears down on West Virginia quarterback Eric Boykin. The Huskers held the Mountaineers to 89 total yards, the defense's best showing since allowing Iowa State 53 yards in 1984.

JEFF BUNDY

CHAMPIONS





PHIL JOHNSON

Abdul Muhammad, who considered redshirting because of a slow recovery from a lacerated liver in the 1994 Orange Bowl, caught a 23-yard pass against West Virginia. He would lead the Huskers with 23 catches for the season.



and a fumble.

"He's the front-runner for the Heisman Trophy," said Mark Blaudschun, a voter from the Boston Globe.

The only Huskers looking more confident and in control than Frazier were Nebraska's Blackshirts. These are scary people. Call them the Werewolves of Lincoln.

Granted, West Virginia had two babes in the woods at quarterback. But Nebraska, as Osborne said, "never gave them a chance." Eight sacks. Eight yards rushing. The Werewolves answered the question "Can they live without Trev Alberts?" with a stunning slaughter. They are comfortable in the third year of this 4-3 defense, and it shows. Scary comfortable. Parts are exchanged without warning. Names and numbers blend together. If Dwayne Harris, Donta Jones and Ed Stewart weren't flying around the ball Sunday, backups Grant Wistrom and Jared Tomich were creating havoc.

It was the kind of day that had people reminiscing to 1983, when Nebraska stepped on Penn State 44-6 at the inaugural Kickoff Classic for a springboard to 12-0 before losing the national title to Miami. But there was a noticeable difference Sunday. This year's defense is light years better than the 1983 unit. It is better than 1993.

The team might be, too.

"This is a different season," Wiegert said. "Totally different team. We weren't trying to prove the Orange Bowl wasn't a fluke. We're just trying to win every week and get to another national title game."

Good start. Good place to start. If they can make it here, they can make it anywhere.

NEBRASKA	3	21	0	7—31
W. VIRGINIA	0	0	0	0—0

N—FG TOM SIELER 32

N—TOMMIE FRAZIER 25 RUN (SIELER KICK)

N—REGGIE BAUL 12 PASS FROM FRAZIER (SIELER KICK)

N—FRAZIER 27 RUN (SIELER KICK)

N—FRAZIER 42 RUN (SIELER KICK)

	N	WV
FIRST DOWNS	28	9
RUSHES-YARDS	60-368	38-8
PASSING YARDS	100	81
TOTAL YARDS	468	89
RETURN YARDS	152	10
PASSES	8-17-2	8-18-2
PUNTS	3-48.3	9-60.1
FUMBLES-LOST	4-3	4-1
PENALTIES-YARDS	8-41	5-44

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING, FRAZIER 12-130, PHILLIPS 24-126, SCHLESINGER 8-31, CHILDS 8-30, BENNING 5-19, MAKOVICKA 2-11, BERRINGER 2-9, NORRIS 1-5, UHLIR 1-5, SCHUSTER 1-4. WV, WALKER 12-46, BARBER 8-23, GARY 2-4, FREEMAN 2-3, NIXON 1-0, JOHNSTON 7-MINUS 29, BOYKIN 8-MINUS 39.

PASSING, FRAZIER 8-16-2 100, PHILLIPS 0-1-0 0. WV, BOYKIN 4-13-1 62, JOHNSTON 2-9-1 19.

RECEIVING, BAUL 3-46, PHILLIPS 2-17, MUHAMMAD 1-23, GILMAN 1-7, HOLBEN 1-7. WV, VANTERPOOL 3-50, PURNELL 2-36, GARY 1-MINUS 5.



PHIL JOHNSON

Split end Reggie Baul caught three passes for 46 yards, including a 12-yarder for a touchdown. He also returned three punts for 56 yards.





PHIL JOHNSON

Tommie Frazier collected 172 total yards against Texas Tech, running for 84 and passing for 88. That gave him a two-game total of 402 total yards.



NEBRASKA	42
TEXAS TECH	16

S e p t e m b e r 8 , 1 9 9 4

# HUSKERS COME ON STRONG

*LONG DRIVES DOOM RAIDERS IN SECOND HALF*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**LUBBOCK, TEXAS**—It was neither pretty, nor perfect. But Nebraska's work during a 42-16 win over Texas Tech was good enough to keep the nation's top-ranked team undefeated at 2-0.

"We did a job tonight, but that was about it," NU Coach Tom Osborne said after his team used back-to-back 82-yard touchdown drives to blunt a third-quarter rally that brought Tech (1-1) within five points.

"We played good football, but not inspired football."

As for whether it was good enough to keep Nebraska No. 1, Osborne indicated that he didn't care. After admitting that he voted Florida No. 1 on his coaches' poll ballot last week, he said he hoped the struggle with Tech might cool some of the No. 1 fever.

"I think people have gotten awfully excited awfully fast," Osborne said. "I've been real concerned about that. I can't seem to settle them down. Maybe we can settle them down on the field."

"We're very mortal. We have a good football team. But we've got a long way to go and a lot of things to prove."

Nebraska proved to 32,768 fans at Jones Stadium that it can run the ball. The Huskers' 524 rushing yards were the most since they gained 529 in a 1991 victory over Colorado State.

I-back Lawrence Phillips ran for a career-high 175 yards in 19 carries and touchdowns of 56 and 2 yards.

Fullback Cory Schlesinger ran for a career-high 84 yards in six carries.

Quarterback Tommie Frazier ran for 84 yards in 13 carries, including a 58-yard touchdown run in the first quarter that matched the longest of his career.

The passing wasn't as pretty.

Frazier and backup Brook Berringer were 5 of 17 for 88 yards with one interception. "We need to throw and catch better," Osborne said. "When we have as many guys running loose as we did, we've got to capitalize."

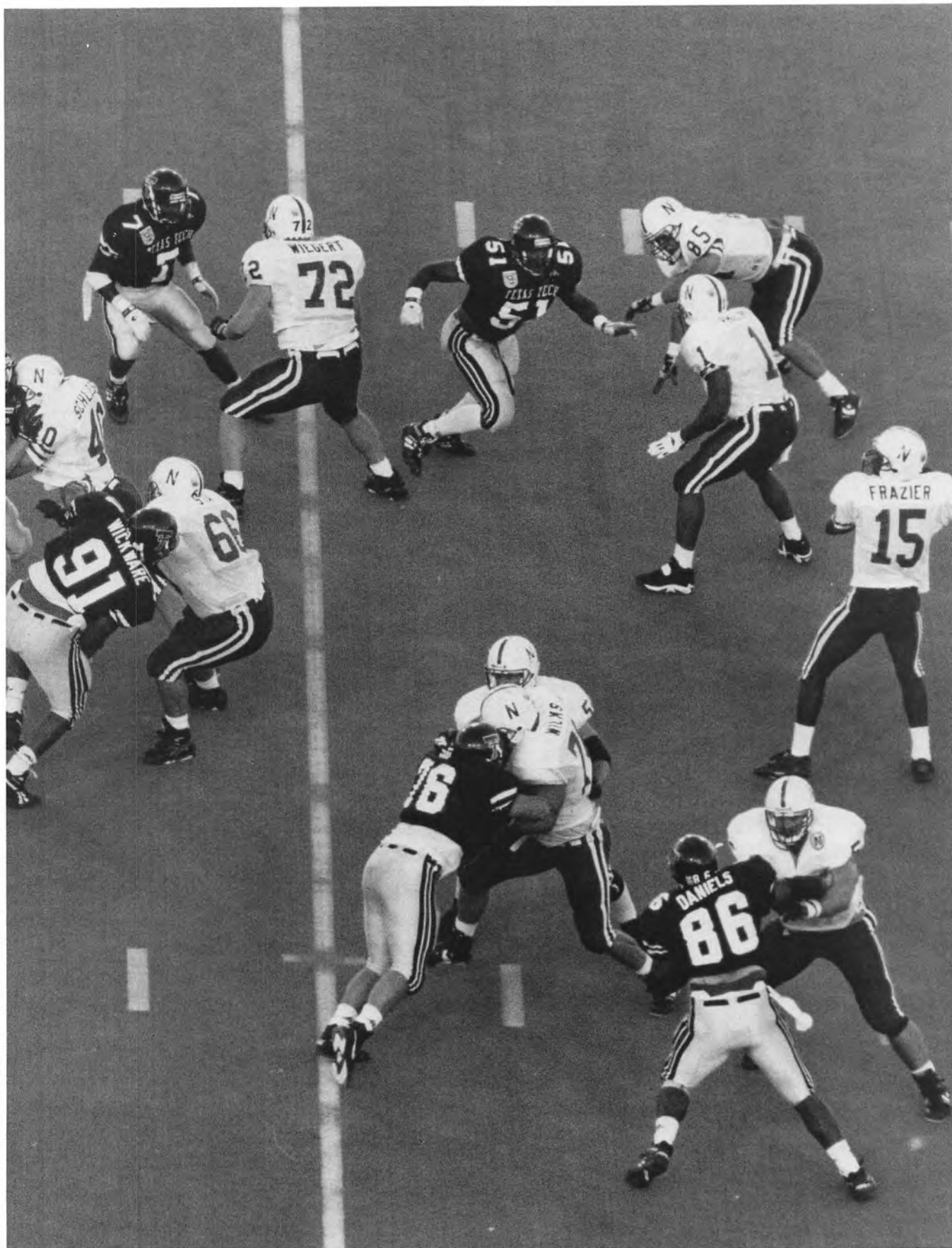
Defensively, the Huskers gave up their first points of the season. But arguable calls on a 43-yard pass completion and a pass interference call near the end zone kept Tech drives alive that produced its first nine points.

Osborne said the biggest negative on defense was losing starting free safety Mike Minter with a torn knee ligament. "There are several guys we can't afford to lose," he said. "Mike definitely was one of them."

Texas Tech Coach Spike Dykes, whose team scared Nebraska in the third quarter of a 50-27 loss last year in Lincoln, said coming close again was little consolation.

"It's disheartening to be in there and then lose it," he said. "But they have a great football team. They've got triple jeopardy. Everywhere you look they have a tremendous player coming at you. I don't know if I've ever seen a team stronger or better prepared."





JANNET WALSH — KLOHN

Nebraska's offensive line protected Tommie Frazier and the Huskers' other quarterbacks all season, allowing just six sacks. The NU defense, by contrast, registered 43 sacks.





*Tom Shatel...*

## THUMBS UP FOR NO. 1

**LUBBOCK, TEXAS, SEPT. 8**—Overrated? Well, yes, after two quarters and two minutes, when it was 14-9 — when No. 1 Nebraska wasn't worried about its shiny moniker, just winning the crazy game.

But, well, no, not late in the third quarter, when the Big Red Machine was steamrolling on two straight scoring drives; when it had re-established its clout and had taken the game back from a freshman quarterback named Zebbie Lethridge.

Those Zebbies, they kill your ratings every time.

And that's what Thursday night was all about, correct? Oh sure, a football game. Nebraska 42, Texas Tech 16, or whatever.

But what about the ratings?

Make no mistake: This was a ratings game. This was step one as No. 1, Nebraska's first walk down the runway of the annual beauty contest called the college football national championship race. The talent portion comes later, against UCLA, Colorado, Oklahoma. Thursday night was the swimsuit show with the judges watching at home. How good can you look when you're supposed to win? The Huskers had 612 total yards. One turnover. They toyed with the Red Raiders, speeding away like the Roadrunner when necessary. But their performance also came with several glitches and moments when they looked downright human, if not No. 2.

But what do you want, perfection? It would help.

To be No. 1 is to live on the edge. Every move, ebb and flow is scrutinized by the voters of Associated Press and CNN/USA Today polls, who often are as different as Siskel and Ebert. Nobody is ever certain what lurks in the hearts and minds of voters, except that it doesn't make sense.

Ask Florida, which scored 70 points last week and dropped to No. 2 behind idle Nebraska. Thank goodness Brian Schuster didn't break that last up-the-gut run. So what will it be when the new polls come out Monday? Will the Huskers stay No. 1? Or will the critics cancel them faster than Chevy Chase? You could almost predict the grades as they came down across the country.

Thumbs up: Tommie Frazier's 58-yard touchdown run on the sixth play of the game. Showed quick-strike, big-play ability early. This is going to be a rout.

Thumbs down: NU leads 7-0 at the end of one quarter. Florida would be up 28-0.

Thumbs up: Nebraska goes for fourth-and-one at its 46 on the second series. This shows guts, killer instinct and the all-business approach No. 1 has to have.

Thumbs down: Lawrence Phillips is stopped short.

Thumbs up: Frazier practically yawns on a 3-yard



PHIL JOHNSON

Tommie Frazier outraces the Red Raiders for a 58-yard touchdown on the Huskers' first possession. He also scored on an option play in the second quarter.

CHAMPIONS





PHIL JOHNSON

Lawrence Phillips leaps into the end zone from 2 yards out. It was his first of two touchdowns in the game. He would finish the season with 16.



score in the second quarter, which is how No. 1 quarterbacks do it.

Thumbs down: 14-3 lead at the half, meaning Tech fans are not only still in the stadium, they're in the game. All across the country, voters shake their heads.

Thumbs down: Third quarter and the freshman named Zebbie has the No. 1 team in the country on the run.

Thumbs up: NU flexes its muscles, going up 35-16 on a scoring pass from Frazier to tight end Eric Alford. Crowd begins to leave with 10:56 to go, backup quarterback Brook Berringer comes in with 9:06 to go. Two traits of a No. 1 team.

Thumbs up: NU scores last touchdown while declining to punt on fourth down with 35-16 lead. The bigger the margin of victory, the better. Voters note how the score shows you didn't run it up, but could still score at will.

Overall grade: No. 1. The rule of thumbs in this space is you don't drop a winner, except for unusual circumstances. But not everyone votes that way. Thursday night wasn't unusual. Just a lackluster blowout. Nebraska may lose some votes for sloppiness, lack of a balanced attack (88 yards passing) and its inability to put the game on ice by the Halftime Blitz. That's not giving Texas Tech respect, which is the point.

As for the No. 1 team in the nation, it trudged off into the Texas night, 2-0 and waiting to see if it earned enough style points and if Florida or Notre Dame can

NEBRASKA 7 7 14 14—42  
At TEXAS TECH 0 3 6 7—16

N—TOMMIE FRAZIER 58 RUN (TOM SIELER KICK)  
N—FRAZIER 3 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
TT—FG JON DAVIS 49  
TT—SCOTT AYLER 6 PASS FROM ZEBBIE LETHRIDGE (RUN FAILED)  
N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 2 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—PHILLIPS 56 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—ERIC ALFORD 35 PASS FROM FRAZIER (SIELER KICK)  
TT—BEN KAUFMAN FUMBLE RECOVERY IN END ZONE (DAVIS KICK)  
N—CLINTON CHILDS 30 RUN (SIELER KICK)

	N	TT
FIRST DOWNS	26	17
RUSHES-YARDS	63-524	42-147
PASSING YARDS	88	150
TOTAL YARDS	612	297
RETURN YARDS	5	7
PASSES	5-17-1	11-29-1
PUNTS	3-47.0	8-41.4
FUMBLES-LOST	1-0	0-0
PENALTIES-YARDS	5-44	4-30

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—N, PHILLIPS 19-175, SCHLESINGER 6-84, FRAZIER 13-84, CHILDS 10-58, BENNING 7-45, SCHUSTER 2-37, MAKOVICKA 5-25, BERRINGER 1-15. TECH, LETHRIDGE 6-62, CRAIN 15-46, HANSFORD 12-27, HOBBS 1-7, DARDEN 7-4, WALKER 1-1.  
PASSING—N, FRAZIER 5-15-0 88, BERRINGER 0-2-1 0. TECH, DARDEN 3-10-0 64, LETHRIDGE 5-14-1 46, CAVAZOS 3-5-0 40.  
RECEIVING—N, PHILLIPS 3-39, ALFORD 1-35, BAUL 1-14. TECH, SCHOVELL 4-74, MITCHELL 3-24, DUBUC 2-31, LAVENDER 1-15, AYLER 1-6.

outclass it this weekend. Wondering if you can ever do enough. Just another game in the life of No. 1.



JEFF BUNDY

The Huskers smother Tech running back Byron Hanspard. The Red Raiders ran for 147 yards, the second-highest total against the Huskers in the regular season. Colorado, led by Heisman Trophy winner Rashaan Salaam, gained 155.





Damon Benning hurtles into the end zone from 2 yards out to put Nebraska up 28-7 in the second quarter. The Huskers ran for 484 yards, the most against UCLA since World War II. Nineteen of their 65 carries netted 10 yards or more.





NEBRASKA	49
UCLA	21

S e p t e m b e r 1 7 , 1 9 9 4

# NU RUSH JOB SMASHES UCLA

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**LINCOLN**—The more Nebraska ran the football, the fewer places UCLA found to hide.

"I saw fear in their eyes," quarterback Tommie Frazier said after the No. 1- and 2-ranked Huskers rushed for 484 yards to flatten the No. 12 and 13 Bruins 49-21 before 75,687 fans at Memorial Stadium.

"A couple of their linebackers looked at me like, 'What play are they going to run now? And is it going to be for a big gain?'"

"It was hard for them to call a defensive front to stop us because we hit them with counter sweeps, with draws and with dives. We kept them off-balance the whole game."

UCLA reeled so badly that 19 of Nebraska's 65 rushing plays went for 10 yards or more. The rushing total — the most ever against UCLA in the post-World War II era — boosted NU's national-best per-game average to 458.7 yards.

After three games, Nebraska (3-0) is averaging 7.3 yards each time it runs the ball.

"That's our bread and butter, and we're not going to go away from it," said Frazier, who ran 12 yards for a touchdown and passed 23.

"Yes, we'd like to improve our passing game. But as long as we can run it like this, we're going to."

CHAMPIONS





Tony Veland brings down UCLA running back Sharmon Shah. Veland, in his first start in place of the injured Mike Minter, intercepted one pass and broke up another.



I-back Lawrence Phillips, who ran for 175 yards in the last game against Texas Tech, gained a career-high 178 yards in 19 carries.

The sophomore, who grew up 30 minutes from the Rose Bowl in Los Angeles, helped NU build a 28-7 halftime lead with runs of 12 and 17 yards on the Huskers' first scoring drive. On the second march, he capped it with a 1-yard run by tipping Frazier's high-and-hard option pitch into the air and flagging it with one hand.

After UCLA (2-1) closed to 28-14 in the third quarter, Phillips ended any upset hopes with a 60-yard sideline dash and dance to the UCLA 7.

Two plays later, co-No. 2 I-back Clinton Childs — who had a career-high 78 yards in seven carries — scored from the 8 to start a 21-point run that blew open the game.

The fans roared in admiration while watching a replay of Phillips' 60-yard run on the two new video boards installed in the southeast and northwest corners.

Running Backs Coach Frank Solich also couldn't resist a second look.

"I told myself I wasn't going to watch any replays," Solich said, smiling. "But I did sneak a peek on that one. That was an outstanding effort. He's always capable of that type of run."

The fuel for many of the game's long runs, Frazier said, came from the words UCLA players spoke during the week about how last year's 14-13 loss to Nebraska in Pasadena shouldn't have happened.

Bruins linebacker Donnie Edwards told The World-Herald that "everybody knows deep down in their heart that we should have won that game."

Frazier's response: "They did more talking than they did preparing for us. They talked all

**UCLA 0 7 7 7—21**  
**NEBRASKA 12 16 7 14—49**

N—ERIC ALFORD 23 PASS FROM TOMMIE FRAZIER (KICK BLOCKED)

N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 1 RUN (PASS FAILED)

UCLA—KEVIN JORDAN 20 PASS FROM WAYNE COOK (BJORN MERTEN KICK)

N—FRAZIER 12 RUN (FRAZIER RUN)

N—DAMON BENNING 2 RUN (FRAZIER RUN)

UCLA—SHARON SHAH 3 RUN (MERTEN KICK)

N—CLINTON CHILDS 8 RUN (SIELER KICK)

N—BRENDAN HOLBEIN 5 PASS FROM FRAZIER (SIELER KICK)

N—BROOK BERRINGER 1 RUN (SIELER KICK)

UCLA—JAMES MILLINER 11 RUN (MERTEN KICK)

	UCLA	N
FIRST DOWNS	24	31
RUSHES-YARDS	35-129	64-484
PASSING YARDS	285	71
TOTAL YARDS	414	555
RETURN YARDS	13	17
PASSES	21-35-2	6-12-0
PUNTS	4-40	3-47
FUMBLES-LOST	0-0	2-1
PENALTIES-YARDS	4-25	7-65

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—N, PHILLIPS 19-178, CHILDS 7-78, MAKOVICKA 7-50, SCHLESINGER 7-50, MUHAMMAD 1-30, FRAZIER 7-29, BENNING 8-29, SCHUSTER 2-19, BERRINGER 2-15, UHLIR 2-9, JACKSON 1-2, TURMAN 2-MINUS 5. UCLA, SHAH 18-91, MILLINER 7-38, AYERS 4-15, WASHINGTON 4-MINUS 2, COOK 2-MINUS 13. PASSING—N, FRAZIER 5-11-0 59, BERRINGER 1-1-0 12. UCLA, COOK 15-28-2 217, FEN 6-7-0 68.

RECEIVING—N, ALFORD 2-35, HOLBEIN 2-14, MUHAMMAD 1-15, CHILDS 1-7. UCLA, JORDAN 7-129, WASHINGTON 4-39, McELROY 2-32, AYERS 2-17, ADAMS 2-8, SHAH 1-20, ANDERSON 1-14, NGUYEN 1-9, BRENNAN 1-7

week about how good they are and how they shouldn't have lost to us and that we were lucky last year.

"You can't come out and say things like that."

Few unkind words were heard from the Bruins after the game.

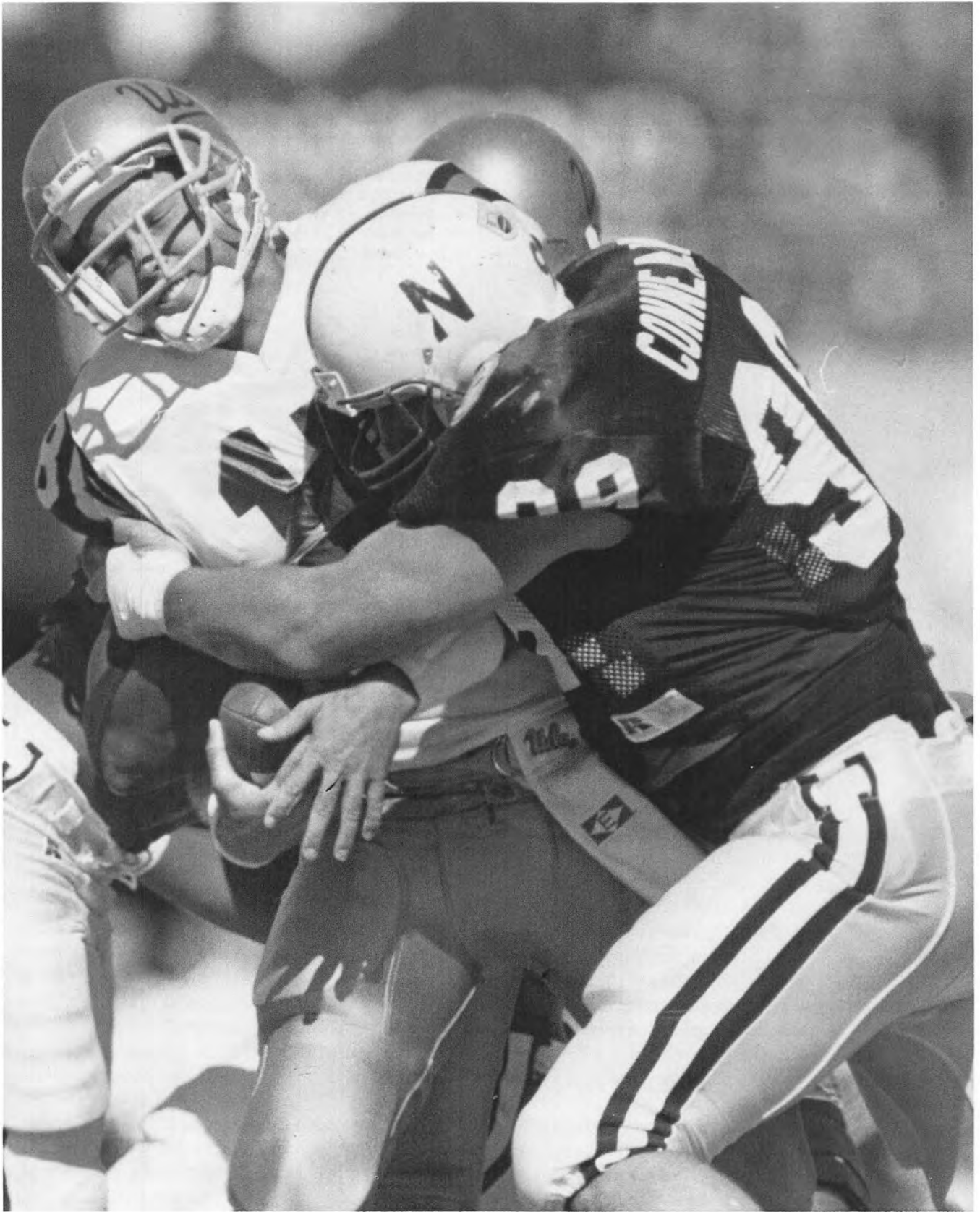
"They are far and away the most difficult offense we face," UCLA Coach Terry Donahue said. "No one is near as difficult to defend when they have good players in their offense as they do now. I was concerned all week about our defense's ability to match up. That proved to be an accurate assessment."

Nebraska used 94 of the 112 players it suited up for the game. Had the substitution not been as liberal, NU Secondary Coach George Darlington said, the score could have been more lopsided.

"It's not presumptuous to say we could have scored in the 60s if we had not played so many people," he said. "And they may not have scored in the 20s."

"But we're not going to risk injury to people just to stay high in the polls. That's not what we're here for."





JEFF BUNDY

Terry Connealy sacks UCLA quarterback Wayne Cook. Cook threw for 217 yards but was intercepted twice and sacked twice.





Tom Shatel...

## HUSKERS PUT IT ON THE LINE

LINCOLN, SEPT. 17 — There are stats for yards rushing and receiving, third-down efficiency and punts blocked, fumbles caused and first downs by penalty. Even one for passes broken up, which has been an offensive category at Nebraska this season.

But now it's time somebody kept track of the pancakes.

Not the ones on your plate this morning. We're talking about the things the Nebraska offensive line rolls up each and every week. Against UCLA on Saturday afternoon, Memorial Stadium was a veritable IHOP.

What exactly constitutes a pancake? Let's ask one of the chefs for a working definition.

"It's taking your man off his feet and laying him on his back, where you can look right down over him," Nebraska right guard Brenden Stai said. "We take pride in that. We try to get as many as possible. We all strive to get the record (15 by center Aaron Graham last year)."

Anybody break it Saturday? "I don't know," Stai said. "I lost track."

We understand. UCLA's defense spent much of Saturday doing the backstroke. It was hammer time, and UCLA was the nail. Over and over, the Husker line pounded the Bruins, like a blacksmith fine-tuning his craft, its strokes coming faster and louder and more relentless with each play.

The linemen are experts at this type of clinical destruction. But Saturday was different. Special.

The Huskers' 484 yards rushing didn't come close to cracking the school's all-time top 10 (10th is 545 yards), but you could sense this was one of the most dominating jobs a line has ever done on the field where the pancake was perfected, if not invented. So stout was the linemen's performance that they, not some fleet running back, were the stars. So imposing that one of their own, senior right tackle Zach Wiegert, got the ABC-TV player of the game award.

"After the game Lynn Swann (ABC announcer)

told me I had won the award," Wiegert said. "I was in shock. But you have to credit the whole line."

Typical modest lineman. "Hey," Wiegert said. "Where's my new Blazer at?"

They were five Land Cruisers out there — Wiegert (6 feet 5, 300), Stai (6-5, 300), Graham (6-4, 280), left guard Joel Wilks (6-3, 280) and left tackle Rob Zatechka (6-5, 315). Quarterback Tommie Frazier and I-back Lawrence Phillips could put them in cruise control and not even bother with the seat belts. Not necessary.

They were smashing through road blocks on four straight touchdown drives in the first half — drives of six, 13, eight and eight plays going 60, 89, 80 and 50 yards. With each touchdown, they were five sharks in blood, diving and tearing for more. And yet there was a science to this demonstration of road kill.

"The main component of wearing a team out is driving them off the ball, pounding them and being relentless," Stai said. "I sensed it today. I was running downfield and some guy jabbed me in the back. They were frustrated."

What they are is a calming influence for a Nebraska team that looks awe-inspiring one minute and uninspiring the next. On a No. 1-ranked team that seems to turn it on and off, they are the ignition.

Best Nebraska line ever? We hear that every year. After Saturday, you will hear it more.

"This is the best line since I've been here," Wiegert said. "We've had size before and experience before, but now we have both. We are all good athletes, and we have good feet. With linemen, it's knowing where to go and not taking a long time getting there."

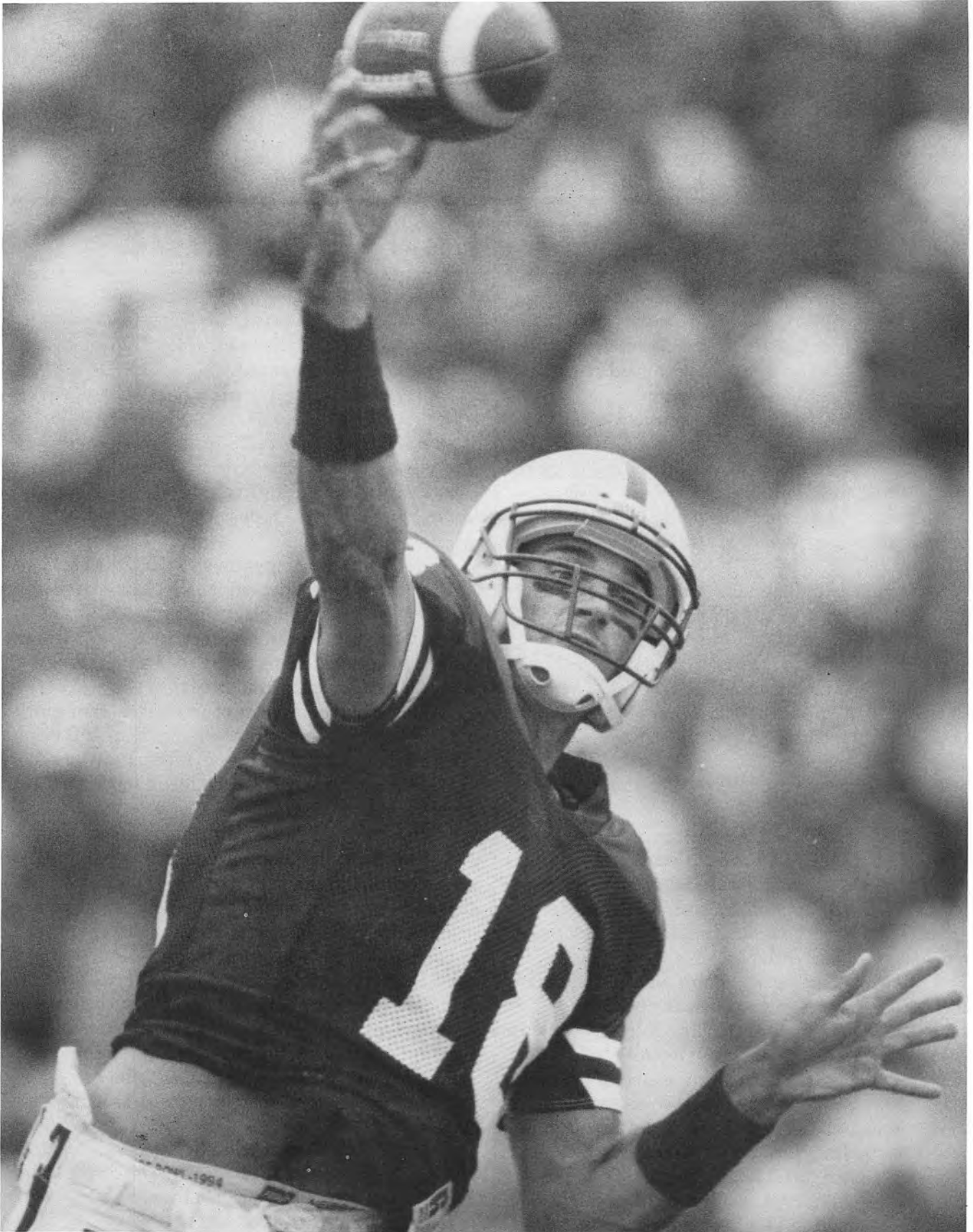
They are so good they may come in handy this winter.

"Hey, Rob!" Wiegert yelled at Zatechka. "Joel told the guy from *Sports Illustrated* that he and I and Brenden can dunk a basketball but you can't."

"I can't," Zatechka said.

Defensive tackles remain no problem.





JEFF BUNDY

Brook Berringer completed 8 of 15 passes for 120 yards and three touchdowns. "It was important for me to get some statistics and a little experience," Berringer said. "I wanted to go out and show the coaches I've got poise and keep their confidence."



NEBRASKA	70
PACIFIC	21

S e p t e m b e r 2 4 , 1 9 9 4

# NU POINT PARADE DROWNS PACIFIC

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**LINCOLN**—Against Pacific, Nebraska used three I-backs in the first series, three quarterbacks by halftime and no defensive starters in the third or fourth quarters.

And it still got ugly.

The No. 1- and 2-ranked Huskers scored on their first seven possessions, punted once, then scored on three of the next four series in a 70-21 rout of the Tigers before 75,273 fans at Memorial Stadium.

NU Coach Tom Osborne said he was happy that 104 players got in the game.

"If there was anything we accomplished today," he said, "we got a lot of playing time to some guys who need to play."

Four threw passes, including scout-team quarterback Adam Kucera, who until a month ago was a student manager. Eleven others caught passes and 16 players ran the ball as the Huskers (4-0) posted the seventh-highest offensive yardage total — 699 — in history and tied the modern-day school record for most points in a half with 49.

"But I worry a little about not having the top units play more," Osborne said.

Almost without fail in his 22 years as head coach, Osborne has used his No. 1 units in the first two series of the third quarter, regardless of the score. But against Pacific, the Blackshirts rested while the No. 2 defense opened the second half. Offensively, fewer than half of the starters ever returned to the

field.

"To be real selfish about developing a team for this year," Osborne said, "we maybe needed to play the top units longer today."

"On the other hand, you'd hate to have the score be 35-0 or 42-0 and get a Zach Wiegert (an all-conference tackle) or somebody like that hurt."

Injury awareness is what limited starting quarter-

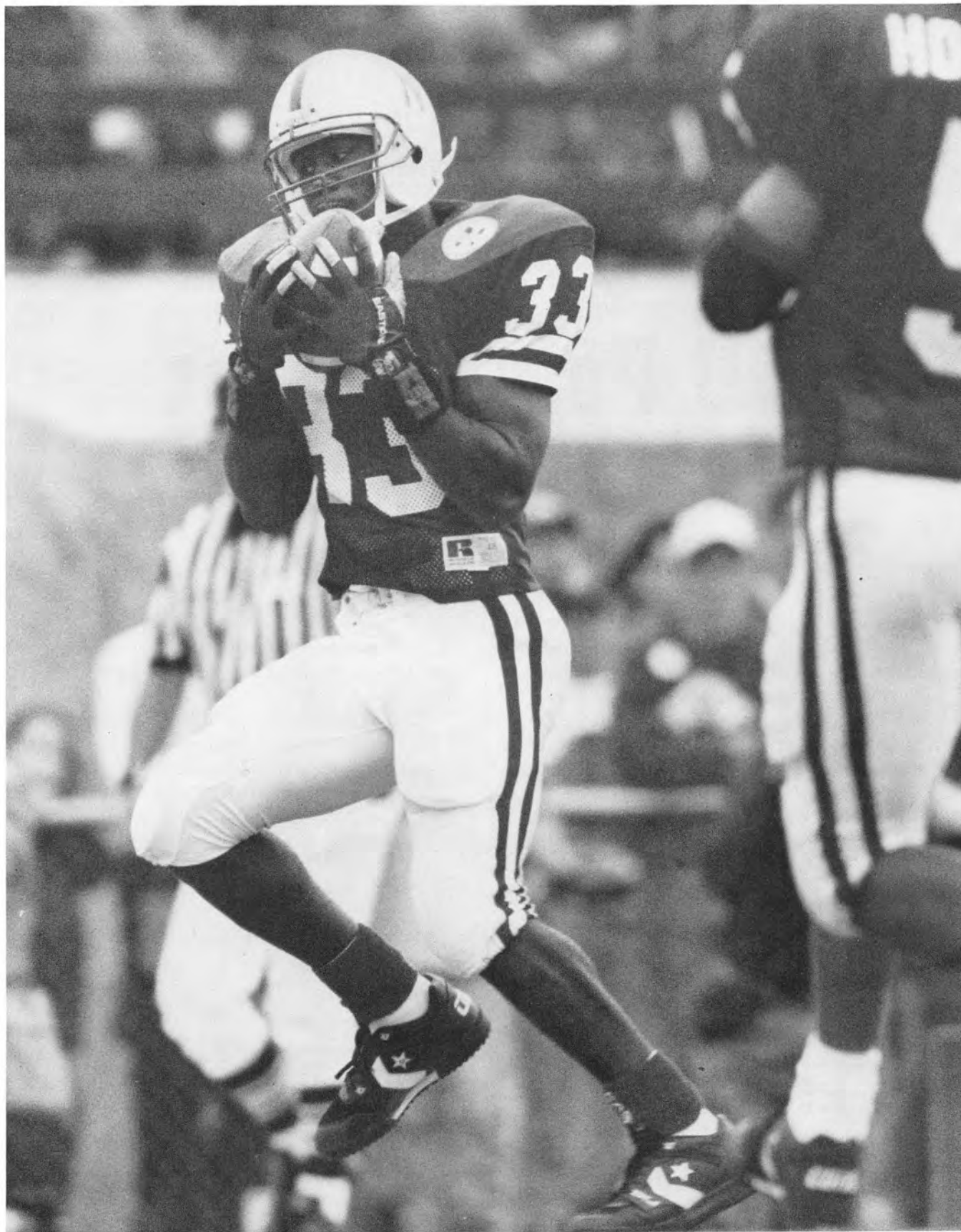


RUDY SMITH

**Terry Connealy sacks Pacific quarterback Craig Whelihan. Connealy finished the season with 6 sacks, second on the team to Christian Peter's 7.**

CHAMPIONS





JEFF BUNDY

Wingback Clester Johnson clutches a 15-yard touchdown pass from Brook Berringer, which put Nebraska up 42-0 four minutes into the second quarter. Johnson caught just four passes in the regular season, but two were for touchdowns.



back Tommie Frazier to nine snaps.

Osborne said the three-year starter wasn't assured of opening the game because of recurring tightness in his right calf. Only after moving well in pregame warm up was Frazier allowed to start.

He left after leading touchdown drives on NU's first two possessions.

Did Frazier learn anything from spending 54 of the game's 60 minutes on the bench?

"To tell you the truth, no," he said. "About all you can do is sit around, joke around and talk about what you're going to do tonight."

Did Frazier improve?

"I completed 50 percent of my passes," he deadpanned, drawing a burst of laughter from reporters.

But Frazier's statistics — 1 of 2 passes for 26 yards and one rush for 5 yards — could damage his Heisman Trophy hopes. He also had a school-record string of 10 straight games with a touchdown pass snapped.

Frazier said the limited playing time didn't bother him.

"I'm not thinking about the Heisman Trophy," he said. "I'm only worried about our team getting better. And if me coming out of the game early got experience to our younger guys, then I'm happy and satisfied."

"Besides, there are still three or four big games out there that can help me. So I'm not worried."

I-back Lawrence Phillips also carried a light load with just nine attempts. But the sophomore kept his hopes of breaking records alive by rushing for 138 yards, including a 74-yard touchdown.

The 100-yard day was Phillips' fourth straight to start a season. Only three other Huskers have ever done that.

Bobby Reynolds had eight straight in 1950, Derek Brown seven in 1991 and Jarvis Redwine four in 1980.

PACIFIC 0 0 14 7—21  
At NEBRASKA 28 21 14 7—70

N—DAMON BENNING 1 RUN (TOM SIELER KICK)  
N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 74 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—CORY SCHLESINGER 8 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—SCHLESINGER 39 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—BROOK BERRINGER 6 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—CLESTER JOHNSON 15 PASS FROM BERRINGER (DARIN ERSTAD KICK)  
N—ERIC ALFORD 46 PASS FROM BERRINGER (ERSTAD KICK)  
N—ABDUL MUHAMMAD 18 PASS FROM BERRINGER (ERSTAD KICK)  
P—JOE ABDULLAH 17 PASS FROM CRAIG WHELIHAN (ROGER FLEENOR KICK)  
N—CLINTON CHILDS 1 RUN (TED RETZLAFF KICK)  
P—ABDULLAH 2 RUN (FLEENOR KICK)  
N—JEFF LAKE 24 PASS FROM MATT TURMAN (RETZLAFF KICK)  
P—DAMON BOWERS 9 PASS FROM NICK SELLERS (FLEENOR KICK)

	P	N
FIRST DOWNS	20	32
RUSHES-YARDS	25-84	59-510
PASSING YARDS	290	189
TOTAL YARDS	374	699
RETURN YARDS	2	99
PASSES	27-51-2	12-22-0
PUNTS	7-29	1-45
FUMBLES-LOST	1-0	2-1
PENALTIES-YARDS	5-37	8-90

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

**RUSHING**—N, PHILLIPS 9-138, BENNING 10-87, CHILDS 10-64, MAKOVICKA 3-59, SCHLESINGER 3-51, TURMAN 4-37, BERRINGER 6-32, UHLIR 3-13, DAVENPORT 2-10, JACKSON 2-10, FRAZIER 1-5, KUCERA 1-4, NORRIS 1-2, STANLEY 1-0, HELD 1-0, SCHUSTER 2-MINUS 2. P, REEDER 4-34, ABDULLAH 9-20, GREEN 4-17, EDWARDS 1-9, BLAKNEY 3-5, WHELIHAN 3-0, WALLACE 1-MINUS 1.

**PASSING**—N, BERRINGER 8-15-0 120, TURMAN 3-4-0 43, FRAZIER 1-2-0 26, KUCERA 0-1-0 0. P, WHELIHAN 25-49-2 279, SELLERS 2-2-0 11.

**RECEIVING**—N, BAUL 2-26, ALFORD 1-46, CHILDS 1-26, LAKE 1-24, MUHAMMAD 1-18, JOHNSON 1-15, CARPENTER 1-12, HOLBEIN 1-8, VEDRAL 1-7, BENNING 1-4, GILMAN 1-3. P, WATLEY 7-126, ATKINS 4-29, BROWN 4-28, BLAKNEY 1-16, BLACKWELL 1-2.



JEFF BEIERMANN

Brook Berringer scores the fifth of Nebraska's 10 touchdowns on a 6-yard run early in the second quarter. The 70 points represented Nebraska's fifth-highest point total in Tom Osborne's 22 years as head coach.





JEFF BUNDY

Freshman Adam Kucera of Lake Havasu City, Ariz., who began the season as a student manager, played the final five minutes. He was 0 for 1 passing and ran once for 4 yards.



*Tom Shatel...*

## MONEY GAME IS BIG LOSER

**LINCOLN, SEPT. 24** — Where's that remote control when you need it?

At halftime Saturday at Memorial Stadium, we were in desperate need of the world's largest remote control, to switch off the ugliness that protruded on the two biggest TV screens in Nebraska.

Surely there was a good old movie on somewhere. Anybody seen "Double Indemnity" lately?

Better yet, could someone turn it over to a real football game, like Colorado's last-second victory over Michigan?

Oh, some might say that would be insulting to show another game during State U's weekly performance. I say it was more insulting to Nebraska fans to stage this "game" at all.

Then again, this wasn't a game. It was a business deal. That 70-21 victory over out-of-place Pacific was a sad day for Nebraska football. It was the day that two schools bowed down and kissed the almighty dollar. It was the day that college football died.

Nebraska scored 70 points Saturday and didn't prove one. What's the point of playing when your first team is done for the day in the second quarter? Why bother?

"After we scored our first touchdown, they gave up," Nebraska tight end Eric Alford said. "Like they were saying, 'We're just here for the money.'"

There was no feigning dignity with Nebraska vs. Pacific.

Alford's blunt commentary raised the only point of the day: Brook Berringer and Co. got some major battle scars, but at what speed? Who got more for the future out of Saturday, Nebraska or Colorado?

Once upon a time, Nebraska took on the world. Love those 1982 and 1986 schedules. But that was before inflation and gender equity held the athletic director hostage. Home games now are precious commodities worth \$1 million. Very few football powers now play more than one road non-conference game because they need the home revenue to support the

rest of the athletic department — because \$1 million will buy a lot of softball uniforms.

There are loopholes called state funding and student fees, two things foreign to Nebraska but two things that bring \$4.5 million to Colorado's athletic department each year and allow the Buffs to skip a home game or two. There were times Saturday when you wished Nebraska would sacrifice the \$1 million and play at Penn State or Michigan. But you tell the women's track team that it can't have a program. Those athletes will see you in court.

The bottom line is that it's all about money. Pacific was a last-minute stand-in for Utah State, but don't look now: The Tigers will be back — next Sept. 23 and probably beyond, which is good news for them. Pacific made a cool \$400,000 Saturday for providing us with this monstrosity.

Then again, everyone plays a Pacific. Sadly, this is what college football has become all too often. On Saturday the stately inscription on the Memorial Stadium cornerstone should have read: "Not the victory but the paycheck, not the goal but the greed; in the deed the gender equity."

Meanwhile, college football and its fans suffer, though after Saturday you have to wonder how much. Who were those people still in their seats in the fourth quarter? Whoever you are, Athletic Director Bill Byrne would like to thank you. You don't have to wonder if Nebraskans will mind paying \$250 per seat to watch Pacific players fall down. Saturday was more living proof that there is no place like Nebraska.

You won't hear any complaints from Adam Kucera, the former Nebraska team manager who suited up at quarterback Saturday. Thanks to Pacific, the Kearney native got to run out in front of thousands of Nebraska fans and live out his fantasy.

"It was a dream come true," Kucera said.

Funny, but the business manager was saying the same thing.





Damon Benning, with Grant Wistrom nearby, recovers Je'Ney Jackson's fumbled punt return at the Wyoming 8-yard line with 5 minutes left. The recovery set up a Lawrence Phillips touchdown that extended the Huskers' lead from 35-32 to 42-32.





NEBRASKA	42
WYOMING	32

O c t o b e r 1 , 1 9 9 4

# NU SHAKES OFF PESKY COWBOYS

BY ERIC OLSON

**LINCOLN**—Brook Berringer got more than he bargained for in his first start as Nebraska's quarterback.

The Nos. 1- and 2-ranked Huskers, 40-point favorites over Wyoming, had to fight back from a 14-point deficit in the second quarter and then recover a fumbled punt in the fourth to subdue the Cowboys 42-32 before 75,333 at Memorial Stadium.

Berringer was the point man in the comeback, adeptly operating the two-minute offense for a score late in the first half and then guiding NU to touchdowns on its first three series of the third quarter to give the Huskers a lead they wouldn't surrender.

The Huskers couldn't breathe easily, though, until late in the game when NU's Damon Benning recovered Je'Ney Jackson's fumble of Darin Erstad's punt at the Wyoming 8-yard line. I-back

Lawrence Phillips ran into the end zone on the next play to produce NU's 10-point winning margin.

NU Coach Tom Osborne was just glad to get the win.

"I was somewhat disappointed in the fact we weren't a little crisper, sharper," he said. "But you have to give Wyoming a fair amount of credit. I don't think we played terrible football today, but we can play better than that."

The 5-0 Huskers outyarded the 2-2 Cowboys 453 to 380. The defense shut down Ryan Christopherson, the nation's fifth-leading rusher at the start of the day, to zero net yards on 12 carries.

But Wyoming quarterbacks Jeremy Dombek and John Gustin grilled NU's secondary for 344 yards passing on 25-of-46 efficiency.

Dombek, though, threw three interceptions, and each led to a Nebraska touchdown.

Phillips, who scored three times, rushed for 168 yards on 27 carries — his fifth straight 100-yard game.

Berringer struggled early in his first game as Tommie Frazier's replacement. Frazier, undergoing follow-up therapy for a blood clot, watched from the sidelines in jean shorts and a warmup jacket as Berringer brought the Huskers back.

Berringer finished 15 of 22 passing for 131 yards, with one interception. He ran 12 times for a career-high 74 yards and three TDs.

RUDY SMITH

CHAMPIONS





Brook Berringer breaks from the pack on a 24-yard touchdown run that tied the game at 21 early in the third quarter. Berringer finished with 12 carries for 74 yards and three touchdowns.





ED RATH

WYOMING 14 7 3 8—32  
At NEBRASKA 0 14 21 7—42

W—MARCUS HARRIS 39 PASS FROM JEREMY DOMBEK (TAYLOR SORENSON KICK)  
W—JEREMY GILSTRAP 6 PASS FROM DOMBEK (SORENSON KICK)  
N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 1 RUN (TOM SIELER KICK)  
W—TERRY HENDRICKS 1 RUN (SORENSON KICK)  
N—BROOK BERRINGER 5 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—BERRINGER 24 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—PHILLIPS 40 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—BERRINGER 11 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
W—FG SORENSON 40  
W—GILSTRAP 2 PASS FROM JOHN GUSTIN (GILSTRAP PASS FROM GUSTIN)  
N—PHILLIPS 8 RUN (SIELER KICK)

	W	N
FIRST DOWNS	18	24
RUSHES-YARDS	21-36	56-322
PASSING YARDS	344	131
TOTAL YARDS	380	453
RETURN YARDS	5	53
PASSES	25-46-3	15-22-1
PUNTS	7-41.6	8-42.4
FUMBLES-LOST	2-1	3-1
PENALTIES-YARDS	6-30	9-91

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—N, PHILLIPS 27-168, BERRINGER 12-74, BENNING 6-46, MAKOVICKA 4-19, CHILDS 3-9, MUHAMMAD 1-3, SCHLESINGER 3-3. W, HENDRIX 1-33, GUSTIN 2-9, HENDRICKS 3-1, CHRISTOPHERSON 12-0, DOMBEK 3-MINUS 7.

PASSING—N, BERRINGER 15-22-1 131. W, DOMBEK 17-35-3 264, GUSTIN 8-11-0 80.

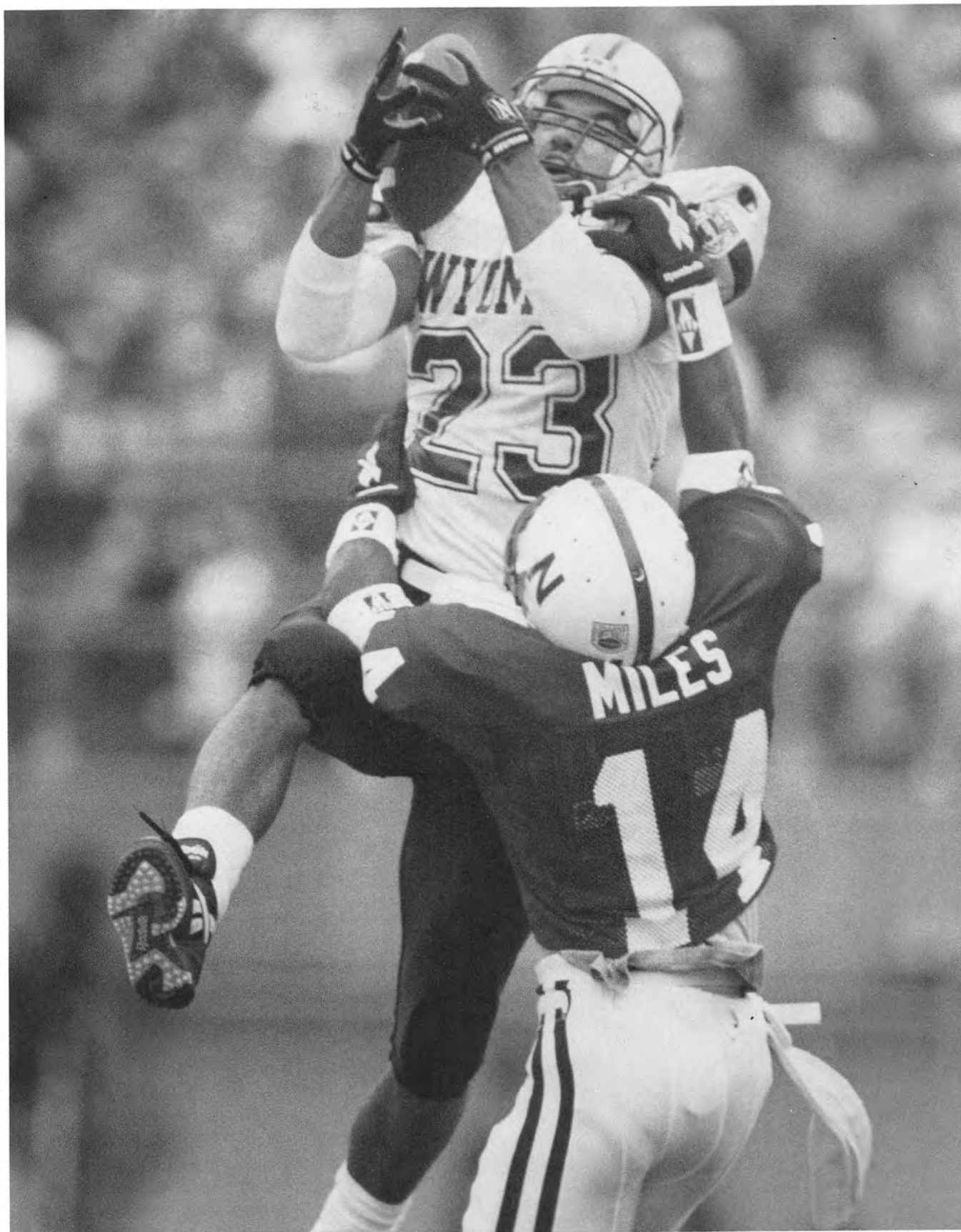
RECEIVING—N, GILMAN 4-48, MUHAMMAD 4-30, PHILLIPS 3-22, JOHNSON 2-14, HOLBEIN 1-11, BAUL 1-6. W, HARRIS 8-149, PRATT 8-126, GILSTRAP 3-25, PEACE 2-15, TILLMAN 1-9, KUHN 1-6.



RUDY SMITH

Lawrence Phillips leaps for extra yardage on a 9-yard pass from Brook Berringer. Phillips' 22 catches on the season were the most by a Husker I-back since Jeff Kinney had 23 in 1971.





JEFF BUNDY

Wyoming's Marcus Harris beats Barron Miles for a 39-yard touchdown that put the Cowboys up 7-0. Wyoming grilled the Huskers for 344 passing yards. "Our secondary made a monumental number of mistakes," NU Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride said.





Tom Shatel...

## MEET BROOK, THE WINNER

LINCOLN, OCT. 1 — Tommie who?

Just kidding. On the biggest day of his anonymous four-year Nebraska career, Brook Berringer did not make us forget Tommie Frazier. What he did was introduce us to Brook Berringer.

Nice to know you, Brook.

Nice to know that four years of standing in the shadows have produced a classy, gritty competitor. Nice to know that Nebraska can turn to another Cool Hand Luke who has the demeanor to win games, if not sell newspapers.

"It doesn't feel different," Berringer said. "It just feels like I played a whole football game.

"It's a good feeling."

Babbling Brook, he's not. But his calm and collect were most handy Saturday. With Frazier standing by in jersey and jean shorts, Berringer completed 15 of 22 passes for 131 yards. He rushed 12 times for 74 yards and three touchdowns.

Most importantly, he won. Nebraska 42, Wyoming 32 was proof positive that Berringer can borrow the family car without totaling it, though the perennial backup wasn't ready to induct himself into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame.

"I'll know more when I look at the films," Berringer said.

Berringer was so efficient that Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne didn't have to wait for rewind. "Brook was great today," said Osborne, who uses the word great about as often as he says McCartney.

What Berringer did was take over a No. 1-ranked team for a Heisman Trophy candidate and act like it was a midterm.

"I slept fine," Berringer said. "I was totally confident. I wasn't nervous at all. It helped that I got a lot of encouragement from around the state, a lot of cards and letters from people telling me they had confidence in me."

Most of that confidence, no doubt, was in Nebraska's vaunted "system." The System always beats the teams like Wyoming and Oklahoma State. But

every year there are games (i.e., Colorado) in which the System isn't enough. You need big plays from special players improvising within the System. Berringer can run the System. But could he beat Colorado? For several scary moments Saturday, the men in brown pants were a bigger question.

The worst possible scenario for Berringer's debut was here: The Huskers arrived flat. The System had to punt on five of its first six possessions. Two turnovers, including a Berringer interception, led to a 21-7 Wyoming lead with 2:12 left.

Berringer's fault?

No. His responsibility? Yes.

What occurred next is something for Berringer to one day proudly tell a grandson on his lap. Berringer put the team on his back and carried it out of an unthinkable fate. Starting at the NU 36, he completed seven straight passes for 59 yards and ran the final 5 yards himself to cut the lead to 21-14 with 12 seconds left.

The drive changed the game and the way everyone will look at Brook Berringer.

"He really stepped up in the huddle," left tackle Rob Zatechka said. "He told us what we were going to do. He and Tommie are a lot alike in that they have a lot of poise. Tommie has all the experience, but Brook is right up there in showing that he's not flustered. He personally took away their momentum."

He then made Wyoming pay for keying on I-back Lawrence Phillips, leading Nebraska to a 21-point third quarter with some swift option moves. When it comes to the option, the lanky Berringer is no Frazier. Then again, he's 1-0. And on a day when the defense was supposed to carry Berringer, it was definitely the other way around.

"There were a lot of negative things said this week," Berringer said. "A lot of people said Nebraska can't win the national championship with Brook Berringer. That the offense is based on Tommie Frazier. I don't think that was true today."





Third-team quarterback Matt Turman directed the Huskers to three second-half touchdowns. "It brought tears to my eyes to see him come into the game," center Aaron Graham said. "I thought about all the things he has gone through to get to that point. We rallied behind him, and it made me want to play harder."





NEBRASKA 32  
OKLAHOMA ST. 3

O c t o b e r 8 , 1 9 9 4

# WALK-ON KEEPS NU ON THE RUN

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**LINCOLN** — With its No. 1 quarterback already in the hospital and the No. 2 guy headed there, Nebraska turned to its running game and defense to preserve its high national ranking.

The No. 2 Huskers got a career-high 221 yards rushing and three touchdowns from I-back Lawrence Phillips and gave up only 136 total yards to pull away to a 32-3 victory over Oklahoma State before 75,453 fans at Memorial Stadium.

Sophomore walk-on Matt Turman played the entire second half at quarterback after starter Brook Berringer was sidelined at halftime with a 15 percent to 20 percent collapsed left lung, which he first injured last week.

"It was a little bit of a shock to everybody to all of a sudden get a phone call from Student Health that said Brook couldn't play anymore," NU Coach Tom Osborne said. "I had no idea, and I don't think he did either, that there was any problem."

Piling that bad news on top of getting word Wednesday that No. 1 quarterback Tommie Frazier, in intensive care at Bryan Memorial Hospital for treatment of blood clots in his legs, is out for the year might have caused many teams to fold.

But Phillips said the reverse happened. "We're kind

PHIL JOHNSON





BILL BATSON

Brook Berringer completed 10 of 15 passes for 75 yards in the first half, but the Huskers led just 9-3 at halftime when he went out with a collapsed lung.



We're kind of becoming a team like last year where everybody thought we couldn't get it done," he said. "We're fighting with our backs to the wall, and that's going to help us."

With Nebraska's halftime lead just 9-3 and Turman coming into the game, there was no secret what the Huskers were going to do on offense.

"It was pretty much understood that we would go to the I-backs quite a bit," NU Running Backs Coach Frank Solich said. "So I'm really proud of the way they ran. They had tremendous days in terms of yards after contact. We're talking 5 or 6 or 7 yards after the initial hit."

On Nebraska's two third-quarter scoring drives, Phillips carried six times for 33 yards and a 2-yard touchdown on the first and five times for 27 yards and a 7-yard touchdown on the second.

When NU added two-point conversions after both scores — including a pass from holder Jon Vedral to kicker Darin Erstad after a bobbled snap — the Huskers' lead was 25-3 and the upset hopes of Oklahoma State (3-2) in the Big Eight opener for both schools were gone.

The Nebraska defense made sure of that by holding the Cowboys to 40 yards rushing and 96 passing.

When word came to the locker room that Berringer wouldn't play the second half, Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride said, he huddled his players.

"I told them, 'It's ours now. We've got to do it,'" he said. "And we came out smoking."

The Blackshirts, criticized after giving up 380 yards and 32 points to Wyoming, allowed OSU only

OKLAHOMA STATE 3 0 0 0—3  
At NEBRASKA 0 9 16 7—32

**OS—FG LAWSON VAUGHN 27**

**N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 2 RUN (KICK FAILED)**

**N—FG DARIN ERSTAD 48**

**N—PHILLIPS 2 RUN (ALFORD PASS FROM TURMAN)**

**N—PHILLIPS 7 RUN (ERSTAD PASS FROM VEDRAL)**

**N—CLINTON CHILDS 7 RUN (ERSTAD KICK)**

	OS	N
FIRST DOWNS	7	30
RUSHES-YARDS	31-40	68-372
PASSING YARDS	96	103
TOTAL YARDS	136	475
RETURN YARDS	5	68
PASSES	6-20-1	12-20-0
PUNTS	9-41.3	2-34.5
FUMBLES-LOST	2-1	4-3
PENALTIES-YARDS	3-31	5-49

**INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS**

**RUSHING—N, PHILLIPS 33-221, CHILDS 6-45, BENNING 7-42, SCHLESINGER 6-29, MAKOVICKA 4-26, TURMAN 6-6, WASHINGTON 1-5, BERRINGER 5-MINUS 2.**

**OS, THOMPSON 11-35, JEFFERSON 5-15, RICHARDSON 6-8, GRENIER 1-4, WILSON 1-4, T. JONES 7-MINUS 26.**

**PASSING—N, BERRINGER 10-15-0 75, TURMAN 1-4-0 23, VEDRAL 1-1-0 5.**

**OS, T. JONES 6-20-1 96.**

**RECEIVING—N, MUHAMMAD 4-53, CHILDS 2-22, BAUL 2-5, BENNING 1-7, HOLBEIN 1-6, GILMAN 1-5, MAKOVICKA 1-5. OS, D. JONES 2-33, DENSON 1-34, THOMPSON 1-15, WATTS 1-11, RICHARDSON 1-3.**

24 yards in the second half. Phillips' 221-yard effort on 33 carries was the 12th-best in Nebraska history. It also made him the 13th player to top 1,000 yards in a season at NU. The sophomore from West Covina, Calif., has 1,006 yards and a 7.7-yard average per carry.



PHIL JOHNSON

Christian Peter and his teammates on the Husker defense sacked OSU quarterback Tone' Jones three times and allowed him just 6 completions in 20 attempts for 96 yards passing.





PHIL JOHNSON

With the Huskers down to their third quarterback, Matt Turman, the offensive load fell on I-back Lawrence Phillips. He responded with a career-high 221 yards in 33 carries. It was the 12th-best rushing day in Nebraska history.





Tom Shatel...

## 'TURMANATOR' TAKES OVER

**LINCOLN, OCT. 8** — This isn't a season, it's a movie. Call it "T3: The Turmanator stalks Miami." Or "Rudy II: Life in Nebraska."

Great script.

Tommie Frazier, the quarterback and Heisman Trophy candidate on the No. 1 team in the country, is ruled out for the season Oct. 5 with recurring blood clots.

Three days later, the backup quarterback, Brook Berringer, reinjures a partially collapsed lung in the first half against Oklahoma State. He goes to the student medical center at halftime and never comes back.

Matt Turman, a 5-foot-11, 165-pound sophomore walk-on from Wahoo, Neb., runs out before 76,000 fans and leads the team to three touchdowns and a 32-3 victory.

The "Turmanator" takes a bow and says, "I'll be ba-a-a-ck."

The coach, Tom Osborne, shakes his head. He finally rebuilds a team to win the national title, and his most important position looks like a picked-over rack at K mart. He jokes to reporters afterwards that he'll probably hold quarterback auditions come Monday. "Where we go from here, I don't know," Osborne said. "I guess to Manhattan (Kan)."

Great line. One problem.

The joke may be on the Huskers next Saturday.

This ain't no party, disco or Saturday matinee. This is reality. A hard reality, especially for all of us who thought Nebraska was so salty it could just crank up the intensity on its other parts and win on automatic pilot.

Now we know there is nothing automatic about this team without Frazier. Heading into the toughest stretch of its season, Nebraska has a quarterback problem. No. 1, it isn't sure whom it's going to be Saturday. No. 2, it isn't sure if anyone left standing can beat anyone besides Wyoming and Oklahoma State, which were not exactly the top two priorities back in August.

If all goes according to script, Berringer, who is from Goodland, Kan., will return to his home state to

beat Kansas State. But if his lung couldn't make it through one half Saturday, can he be expected to play against the Wildcats? A better question might be: Can the gutsy junior beat Kansas State? Though the team moved the ball under his wing, it bogged down with two turnovers and didn't look like the kind of machinery that will be necessary to outscore Kansas State's Chad May or Colorado's Kordell Stewart.

Meanwhile, Turman audibled, found I-back Lawrence Phillips and didn't line up under the right guard. He was functional. He was victorious.

But even on his magical day, the Turmanator is a better story than anything.

Which would leave Tony Veland as the Best Supporting Actor. Whether he likes it or not, Veland is the best option for Nebraska's situation, which is chaos. The junior free safety once upon a time was considered the best running quarterback at Nebraska — he won the job two years ago before another cruel injury took him out. Osborne has designed his offense to a point where it cannot win championships without an efficient option game. Veland gives you that option. What that does, however, is also weaken your free safety spot heading into the teeth of May and Stewart. But then you're gambling anyway that the current quarterbacks can outscore K-State and Colorado, which is not the same as outscoring Oklahoma State.

Stay tuned.

"Right now we would go with Matt Turman (if Berringer can't play) because he knows the offense," Quarterbacks Coach Turner Gill said. "Right now, Matt is the most logical guy."

In a most illogical season, the state of the Huskers is like the quarterbacks: week to week.

"Obviously, you're going to be bummed out if you lose a guy like Tommie," right tackle Zach Wiegert said. "But we have a ton of talent on this team. We'll be fine. I don't care who the quarterback is. I don't care if it's Rudy."

It was.





Jeff Makovicka celebrates his 15-yard touchdown run with 11 minutes left, which expanded the Huskers' lead from one point to eight. Makovicka finished with 56 yards in seven carries.





NEBRASKA	17
KANSAS ST.	6

O c t o b e r

1 5 , 1 9 9 4

# NU DEFENSE SILENCES THE CATS

*PHILLIPS CARRIES NU'S OFFENSE,  
RUSHES FOR 117*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

MANHATTAN, KAN.— In the minds of many Nebraska players, Kansas State talked a good game and then forgot to play one.

"Those fellas ought to keep their mouths shut before they play us next year," defensive tackle Terry Connealy said after the second-ranked Huskers wore down the 11th- and 16th-ranked Wildcats 17-6, quieting an overflow sellout crowd of 42,817 at KSU Stadium.

In the days before the game, Kansas State players and boosters talked about an undefeated season.

They talked about going to the Orange Bowl. They talked about breaking their 25-year losing string against Nebraska.

And they talked about how quarterback Chad May, after throwing for 489 yards on NU last year, would pick the Huskers apart again. But Nebraska (7-0, 2-0 in the Big Eight) silenced Kansas State (4-1, 1-1) with an all-day defensive effort that limited the Wildcats to 242 total yards — 105 below their average and 323 fewer than they gained last year.

"Our defense really stepped up," NU Coach Tom

B I L L B A T S O N

CHAMPIONS





Kansas State's DeShawn Fogle gets an illegal grip on Lawrence Phillips. With Tommie Frazier out and Brook Berringer limited while recovering from a collapsed lung, the Huskers turned to Phillips. He touched the ball on 17 of their first 18 plays and played the second half with a painful thumb injury.





BILL BATSON

Osborne said. "The last two weeks, it has really played well.

"It's the kind of defense we thought we could have all along."

Offensively, the Huskers used only about 50 percent of their repertoire in trying to protect injured quarterback Brook Berringer (partially collapsed lung) and inexperienced walk-on Matt Turman, who made his first career start and played about half the game.

But the basic power running plays Osborne selected were enough to get I-back Lawrence Phillips 117 yards in 31 carries — his seventh straight 100-yard effort. Those decisions also helped NU outgain KSU 134-5 in the fourth quarter and outscore them 10-0.

"We play the first three quarters so we can be strong in the fourth quarter," Osborne said. "It's a physical style.

"I was really glad about our fourth-quarter performance. We kept coming on as the game went along."

The Huskers said recalling all of Kansas State's bold pregame talk helped inspire them to the end.

"I was reading all week about how they were going to do this and going to do that to us," offensive tackle Zach Wiegert said. "It gave us fuel to play the way we did."

Adding to the fire, Husker Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride said, were some Kansas State quotes about NU's pass defense.

"That put a little life in our players," he said. "They said if we play man-to-man that it will mean a lot of big plays. And the second thing was that they said they knew where our seams are and that they would pick us apart."

Nebraska did play man-to-man almost exclusively. But May's longest pass was 32 yards. And the 64.8-percent passer completed only 22 of 48 (45.8 percent) for 249 yards.

May, who had been sacked seven times in four games, hit the deck with the ball six times. He also threw his

NEBRASKA	7	0	0	10—17
At KANSAS STATE	0	6	0	0—6

N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 2 RUN (DARIN ERSTAD KICK)

KS—MITCH RUNNING 29 PASS FROM CHAD MAY (KICK BLOCKED)

N—JEFF MAKOVICKA 15 RUN (ERSTAD KICK)

N—FG ERSTAD 24

	N	KS
FIRST DOWNS	16	17
RUSHES-YARDS	50-210	23-(-7)
PASSING YARDS	52	249
TOTAL YARDS	262	242
RETURN YARDS	74	17
PASSES	4-11-0	22-48-1
PUNTS	7-37.3	8-36.0
FUMBLES-LOST	2-1	2-0
PENALTIES-YARDS	9-70	12-102

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—N, PHILLIPS 31-117, MAKOVICKA 7-56, SCHLESINGER 3-24, TURMAN 4-10, BERRINGER 2-5, CHILDS 2-0, BENNING 1-MINUS 2. KS, J. SMITH 14-29, MAY 9-MINUS 36.

PASSING—N, BERRINGER 2-7-0 37, TURMAN 2-4-0 15. KS, MAY 22-48-1 249.

RECEIVING—N, PHILLIPS 2-15, MUHAMMAD 1-34, CHILDS 1-3. KS, J. SMITH 6-29, RUNNING 5-79, LOCKETT 5-78, BROWN 3-44, SCHWIEGER 3-19.

first interception in 186 passes over two seasons, including last year's Copper Bowl. Strongside linebacker Troy Dumas picked it off with 1:43 left in the first half to stop a KSU drive at the NU 21.

McBride said Nebraska dropped four to five potential interceptions last year against May. Despite a 45-28 NU victory that day, Husker fans howled about a leaky defense.

"That hurt our kids a lot," McBride said. "They were maligned over the summer and all year.

"I even heard a guy at our hotel last night say the only problem with our defense is the secondary. Well, it wasn't today."

Though proud of his defense, McBride said he couldn't have predicted the dominance it showed.

"If you had said we would hold Kansas State to six points," he said, "I don't think I would have believed you."

Osborne said he was similarly concerned before the game, especially with top quarterback Tommie Frazier (out because of blood-clot problems) standing on the sideline next to him.

"With Chad May in there and Tommie Frazier not, these teams are real close," Osborne said. "Coming down here, I wasn't sure they weren't better.

"We thought if we could get any kind of a win today that it would be great."





JEFF BUNDY

Kansas State safety Chuck Marlowe submarines Clinton Childs after a 3-yard pass reception. Husker I-backs had three of the team's four catches. The Huskers threw for a season-low 52 yards.





Tom Shatel...

## SCORE ONE FOR TRADITION

MANHATTAN, KAN., OCT. 15 — The words rang clear and true. They left Ed Stewart's mouth and echoed through the Flint Hills and beyond, a cold reminder to those who would make history.

"Nebraska is still Nebraska," said Stewart, the senior Nebraska linebacker. "And Kansas State is still Kansas State."

Was there ever any doubt? Yes. Before Saturday, Kansas State was dressing itself for success. By the power of persuasion, the Wildcats had convinced the world that this was a big game. They got the state of Nebraska to stop talking about Colorado for one week. No small feat there.

Before Saturday, Nebraska looked like the perfect foil for this game of role reversal. The Huskers were without quarterback Tommie Frazier and suddenly found that their schedule had spoiled in the September sun. Whom had they beaten? What had they proved? Impostors? Or the real thing?

As real as the rain falling softly on the Wildcats' parade. Cancel the coronation. K-State will have to wait. Maybe forever. Nebraska is still Nebraska. Kansas State is still Kansas State.

Every year is different; every team has its personality. If nothing else Saturday, Nebraska's 17-6 victory over Kansas State unveiled what kind of shape the rest of this season is going to take. Would the Huskers drive the tank or fall into it?

They took the fork in the road and stuck it in Kansas State.

"This showed a lot about our character," said walk-on quarterback Matt Turman, who should know.

"We sucked it up and showed a lot of courage," said quarterback Brook Berringer, who also should know.

This was such a strange place for a Nebraska team to prove its manhood. This game is an annual layup for the Huskers, if not an alley-oop dunk. A chance to refuel on the way to Norman, Okla.

But then, Saturday was such a strange scene. K-State students filled their section at 9 a.m., two hours before kickoff, to sit and wait in the rain. There were orders in bars in Aggieville to sell only beer in plastic

containers.

But late Saturday, the concern was whether K-State fans would hurt themselves with the broken glass. From King Bill Snyder on down, the Wildcats put all their chips on Oct. 15. Perhaps they hadn't read their Big Eight history or refused to believe it.

"This was for all the non-believers," said Nebraska linebacker Donta Jones. "We had a lot to prove. We have a lot of tradition at Nebraska. We had to keep the tradition going."

But so much of Saturday's game looked nothing like Nebraska tradition. Here was Coach Tom Osborne forced to play a walk-on (Turman) and a quarterback (Berringer) with a partially collapsed lung that could collapse again with the slightest hit. Here was Osborne forced to scrap his coveted option game because Berringer couldn't take the hits. Nebraska attempted only 11 passes because it might expose Berringer.

So the offense with no passing game and no options turned to I-back Lawrence Phillips, who played the second half with a left thumb sprained seriously enough to require a halftime trip to the hospital. All Phillips did, with 11 defenders keying on him, was rush 31 times for 117 yards.

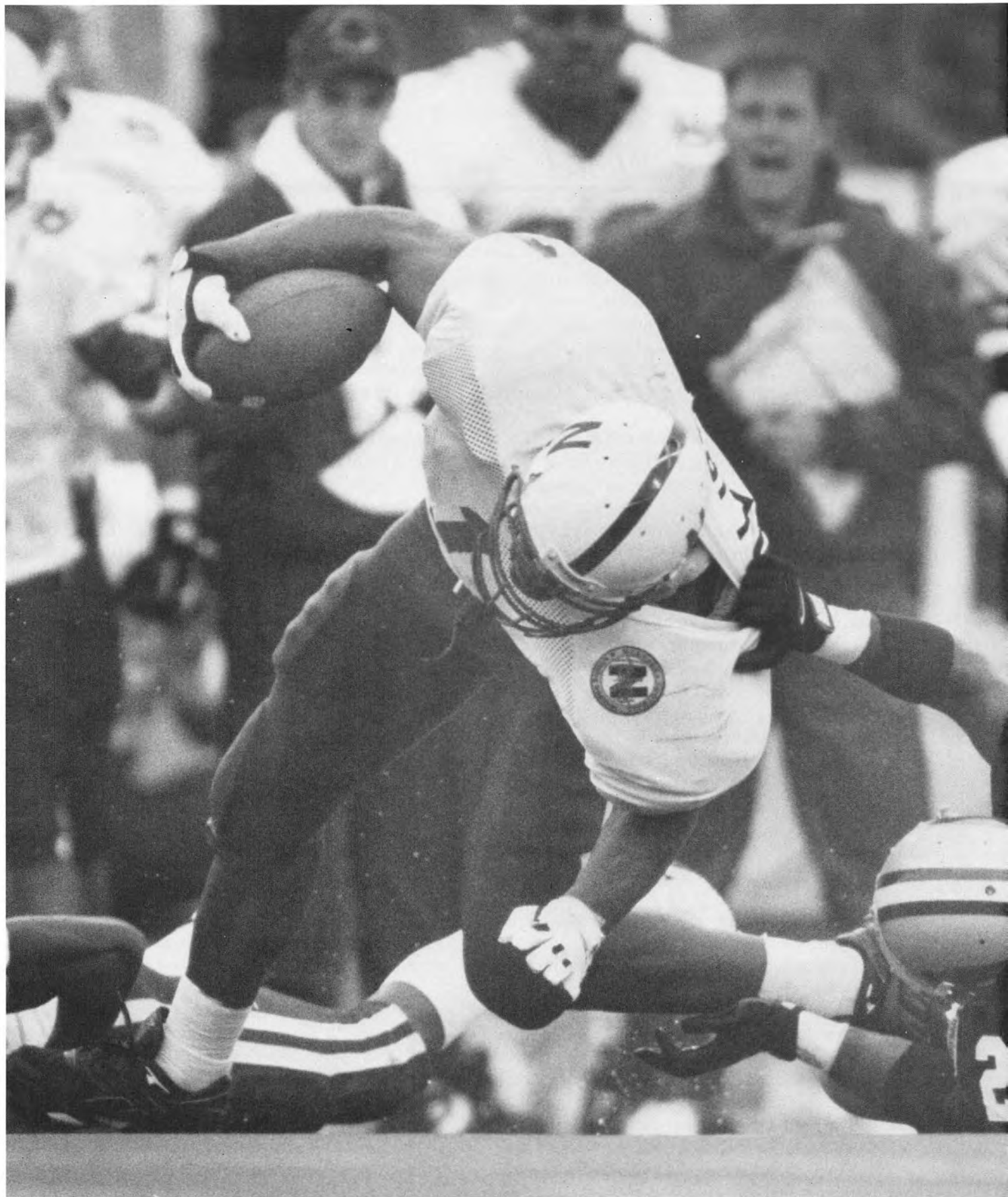
"There is a difference between pain and injury," said senior right tackle Zach Wiegert. "Our guys know the difference."

Nobody bit the bullet more, perhaps, than the Blackshirt defense. Without Frazier, the faces were suddenly magnified. But how could they carry this season when Wyoming had them on the run?

"Everyone thought we were going to get shelacked in this game," said Secondary Coach George Darlington. "It may sound goofy, but if it weren't for the Wyoming game, we would have lost this game. That game gave us some reality."

The reality Saturday was written all over the rubble of quarterback Chad May's legend: The senior threw for 249 yards, but he cashed in for only six points. May's interception streak was broken when he threw directly to Troy Dumas. May said he didn't see Dumas. Which was a direct result of the best pass pressure by Nebraska this season.





Kansas State's Steve Hanks tries to bring down Lawrence Phillips. Phillips carried the ball 31 times, giving him 64 carries in two games with Tommie Frazier out of the lineup.





JEFF BUNDY

Just in time.

"This was a big step," Osborne said. "They were going to step up and play defense like we thought or they weren't. This gives us a chance to accomplish the goals we set at the beginning of the season. We'll just have to do it a different way."

They'll have to do it without the option. They'll have to do it on the guts and courage exemplified by Turman, Berringer and all the rest. They'll have to do it like they did Saturday, when they lined up and dared Kansas State to stop them. And their tradition.

"This shows we have a lot of heart," Wiegert said. "We have a lot of guys who had a taste of playing for a championship last year, and they want to go back."

One team came to redefine its tradition Saturday, but it was the other that did. Nebraska is still Nebraska.





JEFF BUNDY

Cory Schlesinger gained 35 yards in seven carries against the Tigers. Schlesinger finished the season as Nebraska's second-leading rusher with 456 yards, averaging 7.2 yards a carry.



NEBRASKA	42
MISSOURI	7

O c t o b e r 2 2 , 1 9 9 4

# HUSKERS SMOOTH IN TUNEUP FOR CU

BY ERIC OLSON

**COLUMBIA, MO.** — In workmanlike fashion, second- and third-ranked Nebraska took care of business against Missouri, winning 42-7 before 50,537 at Faurot Field.

The victory sent the Huskers into the nationally televised showdown against Colorado with an 8-0 record and a nation-leading 21-game regular-season winning streak.

Except for the first quarter, Nebraska was dominating in beating Missouri for the 16th straight time. It took until eight seconds into the second quarter for the Huskers to record their initial first down. But by the end of the game, they had rolled up 482 yards, I-back Lawrence Phillips had rushed for more than 100 yards for the eighth straight game and quarterback Brook Berringer had thrown for a career-high 152 yards and three touchdowns.

"I wasn't sure we were ever going to get untracked," NU Coach Tom Osborne said. "Once we got something going, we got a lot of things going."

The defense, a constant for the Huskers the previous two games against Oklahoma State and Kansas State, held Missouri in check while the NU offense was working out its kinks.

The game's turning point, in fact, hinged on two key plays by senior cornerback Barron Miles.

Holding a 14-0 halftime lead, the Huskers gave the

Tigers hope early in the third quarter when Berringer, running his only option play of the game, pitched wildly to Phillips. Phillips jumped for the ball but couldn't pull it in, and Missouri's Clayton Baker was there to scoop it up at the Husker 10.

After tailback Brock Olivio ran to the 1-yard line on first down, Miles knocked the ball out of tailback Joe Freeman's hands and weakside linebacker Ed Stewart smothered it in the end zone for a touchback.

The Huskers ended up punting. On Missouri's next series, quarterback Jeff Handy moved his team from its 20 to the 48. But NU outside linebacker Dwayne Harris' sack put Missouri in a second-and-17 situation. Miles then stepped in front of a Handy pass intended for Rahsetnu Jenkins for his fourth interception of the season and returned it 27 yards to the Missouri 23.

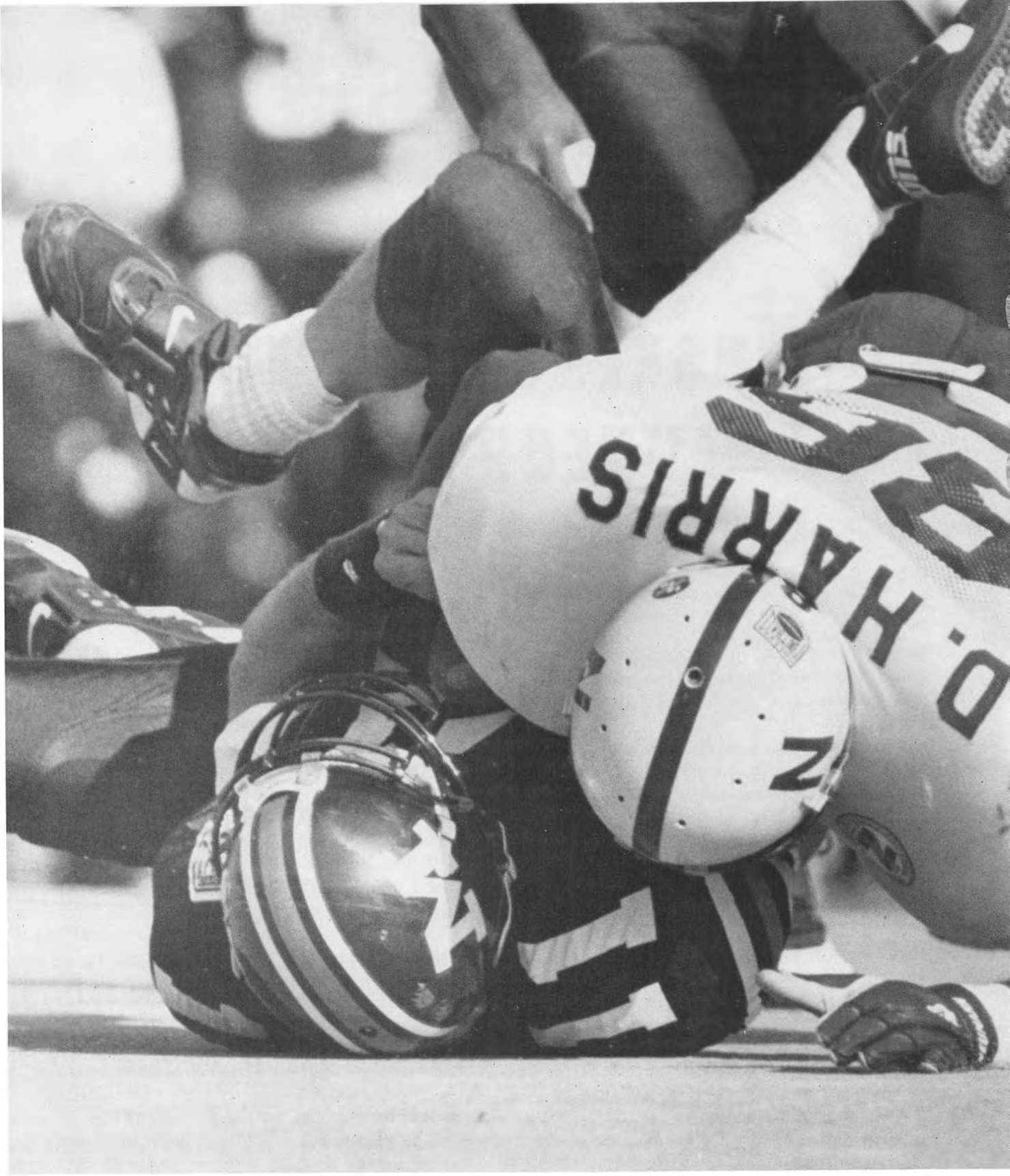
Six plays later, Berringer flipped a 1-yard touchdown pass to tight end Mark Gilman for a 21-0 lead.

For Miles, it was his second straight outstanding performance. Against Kansas State, he broke up a school-record six passes to earn defensive player of the week honors in the Big Eight and nationally by Athlon Sports Communications.

"I don't know if it's luck," Miles said, "but if it is, it's on my side right now."

CHAMPIONS





Dwayne Harris decks Missouri quarterback Jeff Handy for a 7-yard loss. Handy, who ravaged the Huskers for 424 passing yards in 1992, threw for just 150. He was intercepted once and sacked three times.





BILL BATSON

NEBRASKA	0	14	14	14—42
At MISSOURI	0	0	0	7—7

N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 5 RUN (TOM SIELER KICK)  
 N—DAMON BENNING 9 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
 N—MARK GILMAN 1 PASS FROM BROOK BERRINGER (DARIN ERSTAD KICK)  
 N—BRENDAN HOLBEIN 30 PASS FROM BERRINGER (ERSTAD KICK)  
 M—RAHSETNU JENKINS 34 PASS FROM JEFF HANDY (KYLE POOLER KICK)  
 N—REGGIE BAUL 43 PASS FROM BERRINGER (ERSTAD KICK)  
 N—BENNING 2 RUN (ERSTAD KICK)

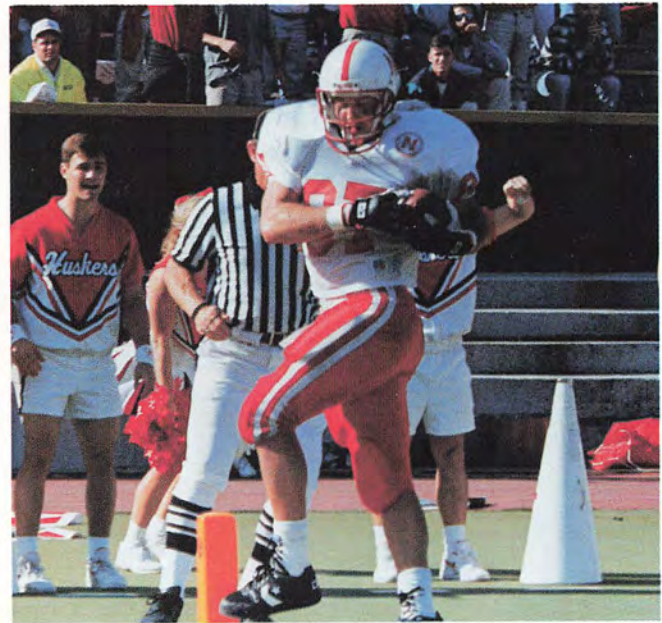
	N	M
FIRST DOWNS	23	13
RUSHES-YARDS	58-330	29-48
PASSING YARDS	152	150
TOTAL YARDS	482	198
RETURN YARDS	7	11
PASSES	9-13-0	19-32-1
PUNTS	4-42.3	9-39.8
FUMBLES-LOST	2-1	3-1
PENALTIES-YARDS	9-75	5-50

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—N, PHILLIPS 22-110, CHILDS 6-65, SCHLESINGER 5-35, BENNING 10-39, TURMAN 1-21, MAKOVICKA 5-18, SCHUSTER 3-14, MUHAMMAD 1-5. M, OLIVO 11-37, FREEMAN 11-26, JAMES 2-10, WASHINGTON 1-0, HANDY 4-MINUS 25.

PASSING—N, BERRINGER 9-13-0 152. M, HANDY 19-29-1 150, CORSO 0-3-0 0.

RECEIVING—N, MUHAMMAD 2-23, BENNING 2-20, GILMAN 2-7, BAUL 1-43, HOLBEIN 1-30, ALFORD 1-29. M, JENKINS 8-90, SALLEE 5-38, F. JONES 2-15, FRAZIER 2-5, OLIVO 1-1, JAMES 1-1.



JEFF BUNDY

Mark Gilman hauls in a 1-yard touchdown pass from Brook Berringer in the third quarter. It was the first career touchdown for the junior from Kalispell, Mont. He caught eight passes in the Huskers' final four regular-season games.





BILL BATSON

Brendan Holbein catches a 30-yard touchdown pass from Brook Berringer in the third quarter. Holbein had nine catches for the season for 88 yards and two scores.





Tom Shatel...

## NU GRINDS OUT ANOTHER WIN

**COLUMBIA, MO., OCT. 22** — The Colorado coaches will get a coffee break this week. One look at Saturday's Nebraska-Missouri film and they might even go out for lunch.

The report on Nebraska's offense could probably fit on a napkin.

Lawrence Phillips right. Lawrence Phillips left. Damon Benning up the middle. When Phillips was tired.

The Nebraska Cornhuskers, who made smash-mouth football an art form, are redefining their trade. On Saturday the option-oriented offense ran exactly one option until the Huskers led 35-7. They threw just 13 times. Mostly, they lined up and dared Missouri to stop the five Mack trucks who make up the offensive line. The final tally was Nebraska 42, Road Kill 7.

For two straight weeks, Nebraska has won by playing Sausage Ball. Trying to grind it out with a meat-and-potatoes play book. Trying to get by on counter sweeps and bloody noses.

It's a dangerous way for a national title contender to live, but that's life without quarterback Tommie Frazier.

"It makes it more complicated," Osborne said. "It makes it more like a pro offense.

"I have never liked pro offenses because you don't have any options. You have one hand tied behind your back. So you're standing there on the sidelines without any options. That will change."

Any hotel reservations for Miami would require it. But the past two weeks have shown this: Nebraska is the No. 1 team in the country, and Phillips can run with the Heisman pack.

What other team can lose a centerpiece like Frazier and keep winning without its lifeblood? Let's see Colorado without its passing game.

Let's see Penn State win consecutive weeks with Cliff's Notes for a playbook.

Let's see Colorado's Rashaan Salaam without a passing threat or an option game. Air who? Hand Phillips the Heisman.

But please use his right hand. Phillips' 22-carry,

110-yard performance Saturday was all the more impressive because of a left thumb injury, Osborne called him "the one-armed man."

Phillips ran harder than the Fugitive. His past few games have been some of the gutsiest in a program with a long line of guts.

"It's a challenge," Phillips said. "But that's what I'm here for. I'll run it 50 times if that's what it takes."

His 22 carries Saturday — and 86 in the past three games — were strictly by necessity. Backup Brook Berringer's partially collapsed lung is healed, but why take unnecessary chances before Armageddon?

That was the obvious plan, especially when Berringer's few opportunities misfired.

He underthrew a sure touchdown bomb to Reggie Baul. His one and only option pitch bobbled into Missouri hands.

Berringer came back to throw a nifty touchdown pass to Baul. If the Huskers are lucky, the Colorado coaches will miss that one on the films.

Nebraska survived on a little luck — that Missouri fumble going into the end zone — and a lot of meat. Schlesinger. Wiegert. Zatechka. Makovicka. These are great Sausage Ball names. They have further entrenched Lincoln as the capital of rushing football in the Northern Hemisphere.

It will take more to beat Colorado, of course. The Buffs are vulnerable to the pass, and Osborne is going to have to blow the dust off the option pages in the play book. Nebraska's defense is back on a championship level. It's time to take a few risks.

But the bottom line is the Huskers are 8-0 with a good chance to regain No. 1 if they beat the Buffs. And if Nebraska does win the national championship, it can point back to these unbelievable two games, when you could count the options on one hand.

"It was frustrating," right tackle Zach Wiegert said. "But we did it. We survived. It wasn't pretty, but it was effective."

Sausage Ball, that is. But now it's time to expand the menu.





BILL BATSON

Cory Schlesinger beats Colorado's Chris Hudson to the end zone for a 14-yard touchdown in the first quarter. That was the Huskers' only touchdown in a dominating first quarter: Colorado did not get a first down until the final minute. Nebraska outyarded the Buffaloes 102-33 and held the ball for all but three minutes.



NEBRASKA	24
COLORADO	7

O c t o b e r 2 9 , 1 9 9 4

# WHY NOT No. 1?

*HUSKERS FLEX MUSCLES, HAND BUFFALOES 1ST LOSS*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**LINCOLN**—What was supposed to be the game of the year in the Big Eight Conference wasn't even the game of the day.

Nebraska drained the drama from a matchup of undefeated and second- and third-ranked teams by scoring on four of its first six possessions and holding Colorado's 40-point-a-game offense to one touchdown in a 24-7 beating of the Buffaloes.

"They found a way to make us look like idiots," CU defensive tackle Darius Holland said. "They kicked us."

Some of the 76,131 fans making up the 200th straight sellout crowd at Memorial Stadium didn't seem to mind that the game lacked a heart-pounding finish. They ripped down both goalposts anyway, for the eighth time in stadium history.

Perhaps it was to celebrate NU's first win over a higher-ranked opponent since the Huskers beat Louisiana State in the Sugar Bowl after the 1986 season. Or maybe it was to express happiness over breaking a 12-game losing string covering seven seasons against Top 5 opponents.

Or could it have been in anticipation of a move to No. 1 in the polls?

Any comment on that, defensive end Donta Jones?

"I know we've got a lot more believers now," said NU's ABC player of the game, who had seven tackles and a sack. "In my mind, considering the way we played, we deserve to be No. 1."

How about you, quarterback Brook Berringer?

"It doesn't seem like anything we've done so far has impressed anyone," said the junior, who in just his fourth career start completed 12 of 17 passes for 142 yards and a touchdown. "But this was a big game, and we played so well. So it should help us."

Husker Coach Tom Osborne declined to get into the poll politicking, even though seven Associated Press voters covered the game.

"But this was a big step," he said. "We've got a chance to get some things done."

Nebraska's 17-0 lead at halftime that grew to 24-0 five minutes into the third quarter might have shocked people around the country.

Las Vegas oddsmakers had listed the Huskers as an underdog at home — by 1 point — for only the sixth time in Osborne's tenure.

But Osborne said he wasn't surprised by the result.

"I really felt like more of an underdog when we went to Kansas State because of our injury situation with the quarterbacks," he said. "Today, I felt if we played well that we would win."

That doesn't mean Osborne thought the crunching of Colorado would come easily.

"We put in quite a bit of new stuff," he said. "Some we had worked on for a couple of weeks. Some we put in on Monday."

"We thought we had to change up some. They have good people. We didn't want to come in with a pat hand."

Without offering specifics, Osborne said the new





Lawrence Phillips powered his way to 103 yards in 24 carries against the Buffaloes. NU statisticians originally credited Phillips with 86 yards, but a midweek change kept alive his streak of 100-yard games. The statisticians charged a 17-yard loss on an errant pitch to Brook Berringer instead of Phillips. A CU spokesman said the change was justified.





BILL BATSON

COLORADO 0 0 7 0—7  
At NEBRASKA 7 10 7 0—24

N—CORY SCHLESINGER 14 RUN (TOM SIELER KICK)  
N—FG SIELER 24  
N—CLINTON CHILDS 2 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
N—ERIC ALFORD 30 PASS FROM BROOK BERRINGER (SIELER KICK)  
C—RASHAAN SALAAM 6 RUN (NEIL VOSKERITCHIAN KICK)

	C	N
FIRST DOWNS	18	20
RUSHES-YARDS	37-155	53-203
PASSING YARDS	159	142
TOTAL YARDS	314	345
RETURN YARDS	7	9
PASSES	13-30-0	12-17-1
PUNTS	6-38.3	6-38.3
FUMBLES-LOST	0-0	1-0
PENALTIES-YARDS	4-30	6-41

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

**RUSHING**—N, PHILLIPS 24-103, SCHLESINGER 8-65, MAKOVICKA 3-32, CHILDS 5-14, BERRINGER 8-2, MUHAMMAD 1-1, BENNING 3-1. C, SALAAM 22-134, STEWART 14-24, TROUTMAN 1-MINUS 3.

**PASSING**—N, BERRINGER 12-17-1 142. C, STEWART 12-28-0 150, DETMER 1-2-0 9.

**RECEIVING**—N, ALFORD 5-78, GILMAN 4-46, MUHAMMAD 2-14, PHILLIPS 1-4. C, WESTBROOK 6-80, CARRUTH 2-28, SALAAM 2-24, LEPSIS 2-18, SAVOY 1-9.

looks on defense involved two new blitzes and some subtle adjustments in alignment.

Whatever they were, they worked for NU (9-0, 4-0) against CU (7-1, 3-1). Colorado, averaging 502.9 yards a game on offense, gained only 89 in the first half and 314 overall. The Buffaloes' seven points were 33 below their average.

"The defense played great," Osborne said. "The defensive staff did a great job of coming up with some things that gave them different pictures."

One CU player who never appeared to get the picture was quarterback Kordell Stewart. The senior, ranked 10th nationally in total offense, rushed for just 24 yards and completed only 12 of 28 passes for 150 yards.

"I think he was scared all day," NU middle linebacker Phil Ellis said. "He was looking around a lot, and he didn't like what he saw."

"For three years, he hasn't done anything against us. This year, he was talking about how it was going to be different. We took that personally."





JEFF BUNDY

Brook Berringer excelled in his first major test as Husker quarterback, completing 12 of 17 passes for 142 yards and a touchdown. "Brook was great," NU Coach Tom Osborne said. "It was just like he was going out for a scrimmage. This was the biggest game he had ever been involved in, and he responded very well."





Tom Shatel...

## OSBORNE LETS ACTIONS TALK

LINCOLN, OCT. 29 — Nebraska is the No. 1 team in the country. But don't quote Tom Osborne on that.

"I don't much care about the polls," Nebraska's football coach said minutes after his team showed that it did by thumping Colorado 24-7. "I'll let you guys decide that."

On a day when the No. 2- and No. 3-ranked Huskers decisively narrowed the national championship race to themselves and Penn State...Moments after he put the finishing touch on perhaps his best coaching job in 22 years and staked a claim for his first national coach-of-the-year award...And in a political process that often puts as much emphasis on press conference performances as on-the-field statements...Maybe the best move Osborne made all day was excusing himself from his own press conference.

"Anything else I say," Osborne said, "might be counterproductive."

There's much to be said for the Oz approach. There's already too much lobbying for college football's top prize. But with No.1-ranked Penn State stating its case with a 63-14 rout of Ohio State, the least Osborne could do is hold up an index finger for the cameras.

Then again, maybe that wasn't necessary at all. Osborne's political team presented all the evidence anyone needed Saturday at Memorial Stadium.

The Huskers are No. 1 because of a punishing offensive line that seems bent on destroying any and all moving objects in its path, including Hurricanes. They are No. 1 because of a devastating defense that continues to show a championship form when the chips are piled high in the middle of the table.

They are No. 1 because they took the annual Colorado hype, crushed it into a ball and tossed it in the nearest gutter. If Colorado was the No. 1 team in the country, as some were suggesting because of the Buffs' schedule, then the Huskers deemed themselves 1-A.

Mostly, they are No. 1 because junior quarterback Tommie Frazier has been wearing jean shorts to games since Oct. 1. Whether Penn State could perform the same trick without a top gun is as unknown as who would win Nebraska vs. Penn State.

The Huskers could only try to make the process as subjective as possible.

"We're No. 1, plain and simple," said linebacker Troy Dumas. "Everyone who downgrades us can't do that anymore if they saw this."

"If we're not No. 1, something is ridiculous."

Seven Associated Press voters witnessed the game Saturday along with one USA Today/CNN voter (Osborne). The other voters will have to use their wits and some ESPN highlights as their guide.

"I hope all the voters watched this game," senior offensive tackle Zach Wiegert said. "They say we don't play a tough schedule, but today we beat the team that supposedly played the toughest schedule, and it wasn't close. They say we can't win a big game, but was there a bigger game in college football this season than this one?"

"They" said this one was not only for poll position for the national title, but also a catapult to the Heisman Trophy. This much we know: Colorado running back Rashaan Salaam (22 carries for 134 yards) won't have to worry about the Heisman pressure. He was a non-factor.

Ditto for Colorado quarterback Kordell Stewart, who might win the Heisman every year if he could skip Nebraska. Stewart was his usual deer-in-the-headlights self again Saturday. He completed as many passes as the Nebraska quarterback (12), which wouldn't be bad except: 1, the Buffs supposedly had their best offense under Coach Bill McCartney and 2, the NU quarterback, Brook Berringer, was making only his fourth start.

Maybe the biggest mistake Stewart made was taunting the Werewolves of Lincoln, a fearsome enough bunch without the extra salivation.

"Word got back to us this week that after the Kansas State game, Stewart went into their locker room and said, 'Let's go have fun with the Nebraska defense,'" Husker nose tackle Christian Peter said. "That was not good."

We'll probably never know if Stewart actually uttered the infamous words or if the Quote Fairy magically made those words appear on a Nebraska bulletin





BILL BATSON

Husker fans savor their team's first victory over a higher-ranked team since NU defeated Louisiana State in the 1987 Sugar Bowl. The Huskers vaulted from third place to first in The Associated Press Top 25.





PHIL JOHNSON

Husker fans celebrated the victory by tearing down Memorial Stadium's goalposts for the eighth time in history. But the win didn't surprise NU Coach Tom Osborne. "I really felt like more of an underdog when we went to Kansas State because of our injury situation with the quarterbacks," he said. "Today, I felt if we played well that we would win."

board.

There were other alleged intangibles. Colorado's horrid kicking game. Osborne outcoaching McCartney yet again with a series of "surprise" blitzes and offensive-line stunts that Nebraska hadn't shown and left McCartney again looking clueless on the sidelines. This isn't a rivalry, it's a rerun.

But it was neither the Quote Fairy nor strategic brilliance that was the difference between Nebraska and Colorado.

The Huskers won because they were the better team, by more than 17 points. It could have been 28-0 at the half, and even when the offense looked sleepy in the second half, there was no doubt. Nebraska even won with its basic Sausage Ball offense, handing off to Lawrence Phillips or fullback Cory Schlesinger, like it had the past two weeks.

On Saturday, there wasn't much difference between Missouri and Colorado.

The Huskers are No. 1 because Mr. Frazier may be the best option-maker in the country with the heart of a lion, but Nebraska still is most efficient at the arts of blocking and tackling. Numero Uno because the foundation of offensive line and defense remain, and now the backup quarterback has won a big game.

So much for that excuse to vote Nebraska down.

How convincing it all was to the voters is still the

question, no matter what Osborne says. Penn State Coach Joe Paterno, who also claims to ignore the political process, cared enough to score 63 points Saturday. The problem with Joltin' Joe securing No. 1 is that he may never give it up. While Nebraska probably plays Miami in the Orange Bowl, Penn State probably gets Oregon in the Rose Bowl.

Then we'd see if the voters were a bunch of quacks.

In the meantime, the Osborne approach is still good for beating Colorado.

"You know he's going to coach a good game," Wiegert said. "When he talked to us this morning, he said, 'You aren't the underdogs. You are at home. They're the ones who are the underdogs.' And they were the ones who broke down under pressure."

"You can get too high for games like this. He's so calm, he helps you stay calm."

That Osborne won't campaign surely will fuel more talk that he doesn't want it badly enough. But did you ever know a fisherman who talked with the line in the water?

"He always taught us that words don't mean much," Wiegert said. "You've got to win by your actions."

Actions spoke louder than words on Saturday. They said Nebraska is No. 1.





JEFF BEIERMANN

Lawrence Phillips leaps into the end zone for a 4-yard touchdown run midway through the first quarter. Though the Jayhawks focused on stopping the run, Phillips racked up 153 yards in 21 carries.



NEBRASKA	45
KANSAS	17

N o v e m b e r 5 , 1 9 9 4

# NO HANGOVER HERE

*BERRINGER'S BEST DAY HELPS HUSKERS THUMP KANSAS*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**LINCOLN**— Nebraska calmed Coach Tom Osborne's fears of a letdown by jumping on Kansas in the first two minutes and never letting up during a 45-17 romp.

The No. 1- and 2-ranked Huskers followed their thrashing of Colorado with a performance that showed 75,543 fans at Memorial Stadium how willing they are to work to win a fourth straight Big Eight title and get to the Orange Bowl.

Among the highlights:

— Quarterback Brook Berringer's 267 yards passing, the best by a Husker in 21 years and the best team total in 16 years.

— Interceptions on two of Kansas' first three plays from scrimmage by free safety Tony Veland and cornerback Tyrone Williams.

— A first-half passing total of 249 yards and a second-half rushing total of 201 yards on the way to 603 total yards.

— A 10th straight 100-yard rushing day for I-back Lawrence Phillips (21 carries, 153 yards).

— Producing 31 points in the first 19 minutes.  
"I don't think this is the type of team that will let down," Berringer said after completing 13 of 18 passes

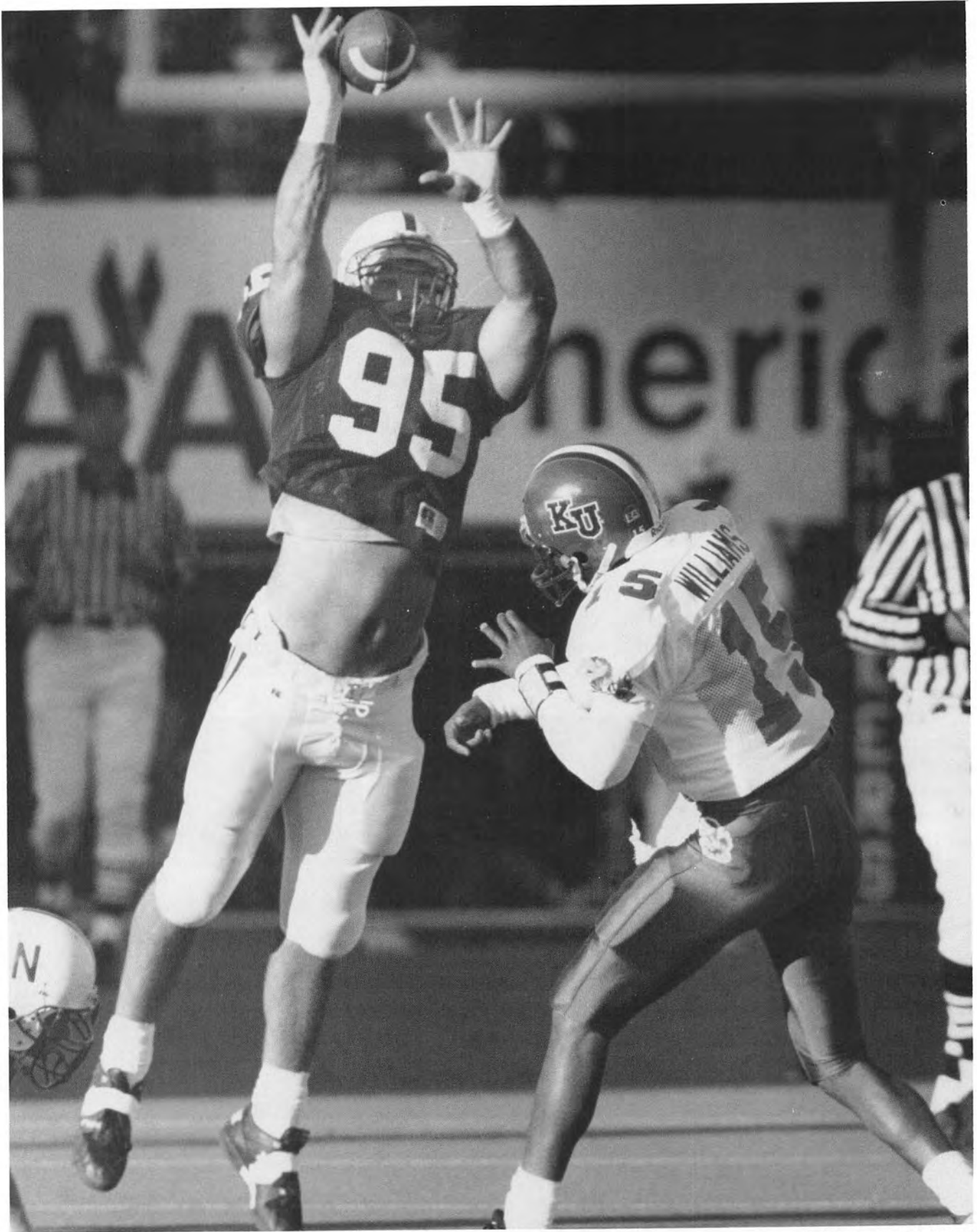


BILL BATSON

Cory Schlesinger outraces Kansas' Dorian Brew on a 40-yard touchdown run that put the Huskers up 24-3 late in the first quarter. Schlesinger finished with 49 yards in four carries.

CHAMPIONS





BILL BATSON

Freshman defensive tackle Jason Peter, brother of NU nose tackle Christian Peter, bats away a pass by KU's Mark Williams. Jason Peter played in seven games and finished the season with eight tackles, one for a loss.



and falling just 30 yards short of Dave Humm's single-game passing yardage record. "We're on a mission, and we'll do whatever it takes to win."

"Every game is the national championship for us, and we're playing with that attitude."

Nebraska (10-0 overall, 5-0 in the Big Eight) had the same thoughts heading into its 1993 game against Kansas (5-4, 2-3) after a big victory over Colorado. The Jayhawks nearly pulled the upset, losing 21-20 when a 2-point conversion try in the final minute failed.

Osborne said that game and the circumstances it was played under were fresh in his mind in preparing for the game, even though the Jayhawks hadn't beaten Nebraska since 1968.

"I didn't have the feeling before the game that we were real focused," he said. "I thought we were OK. But I was a little worried. I felt Kansas would come up here smoked up and ready to play. I thought they had the horses to beat us."

"So the way it went early was very important for us — getting the turnovers and a couple of quick scores. Had we given them a lot of daylight and let them feel they could win, it might have been tough."

"I didn't think we were flat or had a bad week of practice. But it's a little hard to play a game like Colorado where everybody focuses on it nationally and with TV and the whole works, and then come out and play the next week."



BILL BATSON

Eric Alford rolls 17 yards on a tight end reverse, his only carry of the season. It was the Huskers' first tight end reverse since Johnny Mitchell ran one in 1991.

KANSAS	3	7	0	7-17
AT NEBRASKA	24	14	7	0-45

N—FG SIELER 35  
 N—REGGIE BAUL 51 PASS FROM BROOK BERRINGER (SIELER KICK)  
 K—FG JEFF McCORD 41  
 N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 4 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
 N—CORY SCHLESINGER 40 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
 N—JEFF MAKOVICKA 8 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
 K—JUNE HENLEY 6 RUN (McCORD KICK)  
 N—CLESTER JOHNSON 64 PASS FROM BERRINGER (SIELER KICK)  
 N—PHILLIPS 22 RUN (SIELER KICK)  
 K—L.T. LEVINE 1 RUN (McCORD KICK)

	K	N
FIRST DOWNS	12	24
RUSHER-YARDS	45-141	49-336
PASSING YARDS	129	267
TOTAL YARDS	270	603
RETURN YARDS	26	39
PASSES	8-23-2	13-18-0
PUNTS	6-38.5	3-49
FUMBLES-LOST	2-0	2-1
PENALTIES-YARDS	2-11	4-26

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—N, PHILLIPS 21-153, SCHLESINGER 4-49, BENNING 6-45, SCHUSTER 3-25, ALFORD 1-17, CHILDS 4-16, DAVENPORT 2-15, MAKOVICKA 3-14, TURMAN 1-3, BERRINGER 4-MINUS 1. K, HENLEY 16-86, LEVINE 13-42, DAVIS 1-13, VANN 5-5, GOOD 1-1, WILLIAMS 2-1, PRESTON 6-0, SMITH 1-MINUS 7.

PASSING—N, BERRINGER 13-18-0 267. K, PRESTON 7-18-2 107, WILLIAMS 1-4-0 22, HENLEY 0-1-0 0.

RECEIVING—N, PHILLIPS 4-11, BAUL 3-106, HOLBEIN 2-12, JOHNSON 1-64, BENNING 1-37, ALFORD 1-28, GILMAN 1-9. K, FRIDAY 4-60, HARRIS 1-43, REED 1-10, LEVINE 1-8, WILLEFORD 1-8.

RUDY SMITH



Doug Colman and Terry Connealy sack Mark Williams for a 5-yard loss. The Huskers sacked KU quarterbacks three times and intercepted two passes.

CHAMPIONS





BILL BATSON

Reggie Baul pulls away from Jason Harris on a 51-yard touchdown catch in the first quarter. Baul finished with three catches for 106 yards, the first 100-yard day by a Husker receiver since Corey Dixon's six-catch, 116-yard game in 1993 against Texas Tech.





Tom Shatel...

## VOTING GAME TOUGH FOR NU

**LINCOLN, NOV. 5** — Welcome to Coalition Central. This is your host, A.P. Voter. We're live at Memorial Stadium, where the Nebraska Cornhuskers made their latest campaign speech in an attempt to remain the No. 1 team in The Associated Press Top 25 poll. Nebraska 45, Kansas 17. Looks like the Huskers spoke loudly and clearly.

Anybody got a Penn State score?

Ah, here it is. The Nittany Lions, the No. 1 team in the USA Today/CNN coaches poll, hung on for a 35-29 victory over Indiana in a game earlier Saturday that served as the warmup band to an IU basketball scrimmage.

Today the nation's voters will once again go to the polls and vote for No. 1. But did the Huskers do enough on Saturday? Without the benefit of being on the tube, will 45 points cut it? Couldn't they have just scored a couple of touchdowns in the fourth quarter? You know, 59-17 is so much more impressive.

Now, let's take time out for this brief political message: "Penn State says it's the No. 1 team in the country. But let's look at the record. Penn State has not beaten anyone as good as Colorado this year. Penn State won at Michigan, but, hey, who hasn't? On Saturday, the Nittany Lions beat Indiana by six — the same Indiana team that lost 62-13 to Wisconsin and 20-7 to Northwestern.

"The fact is, Penn State plays in an overrated league. The fact is, its uniforms are ugly. The truth is, Joe Paterno voted against Proposition 259 at last year's NCAA convention. Paterno will say anything to be No. 1. On Sunday, don't be fooled by Joe Paterno. On Sunday, vote Nebraska No. 1."

(Paid for by Nebraska for No. 1.)

This is just a suggestion. But on future campaign days, Nebraska should turn Memorial Stadium into a veritable war room. Right. You have the biggest TV screens in college football? Use 'em. Nebraska should have had the Penn State game on the HuskerVision boards Saturday so Coach Tom Osborne could watch out of the corner of his eye. When Penn State scores, Nebraska is able to match.

You do what you've got to do in a nasty campaign.

Except, that is, when your name is Tom Osborne. It was all set up for Oz on Saturday. Huskers were rolling. Jayhawks were cooperating. With 6:41 left in the third quarter and NU up 38-10, the P.A. announcer says, "Penn State 35, Indiana 29." Plenty of time for more seven-point layups.

So what does Osborne do? Puts the second-team defense in. KU eats up more clock. Next thing you know, Nebraska's No. 2 offense is in. The Rottweilers are told to heel.

If you are tired of negative political ads, Tom Osborne is your man.

"Glen Mason is a friend," he said. "I would never do anything to try to embarrass him or his team. That's one of the ugly things about the polls. People get impressed by big victories.

"I don't think that way. I've got some players who need playing time. In fairness to them, we have to get them in. It's kind of a dilemma. But we're going to play out the string the way we've been doing it. If they don't want to vote for us, they won't vote for us. Not much I can do."

Chances are Saturday was more than enough. All voters need look at is the box score. Nebraska had its most balanced offensive day in years. In fact, Nebraska's 267 yards passing were its most since 1978.

Attention, Colorado Coach Bill McCartney: Brook Berringer found his wide receivers Saturday. That 51-yard touchdown bomb to Reggie Baul opened the door to a frighteningly new offensive dimension. Nebraska under Berringer looks like something out of the state of Florida. That potent.

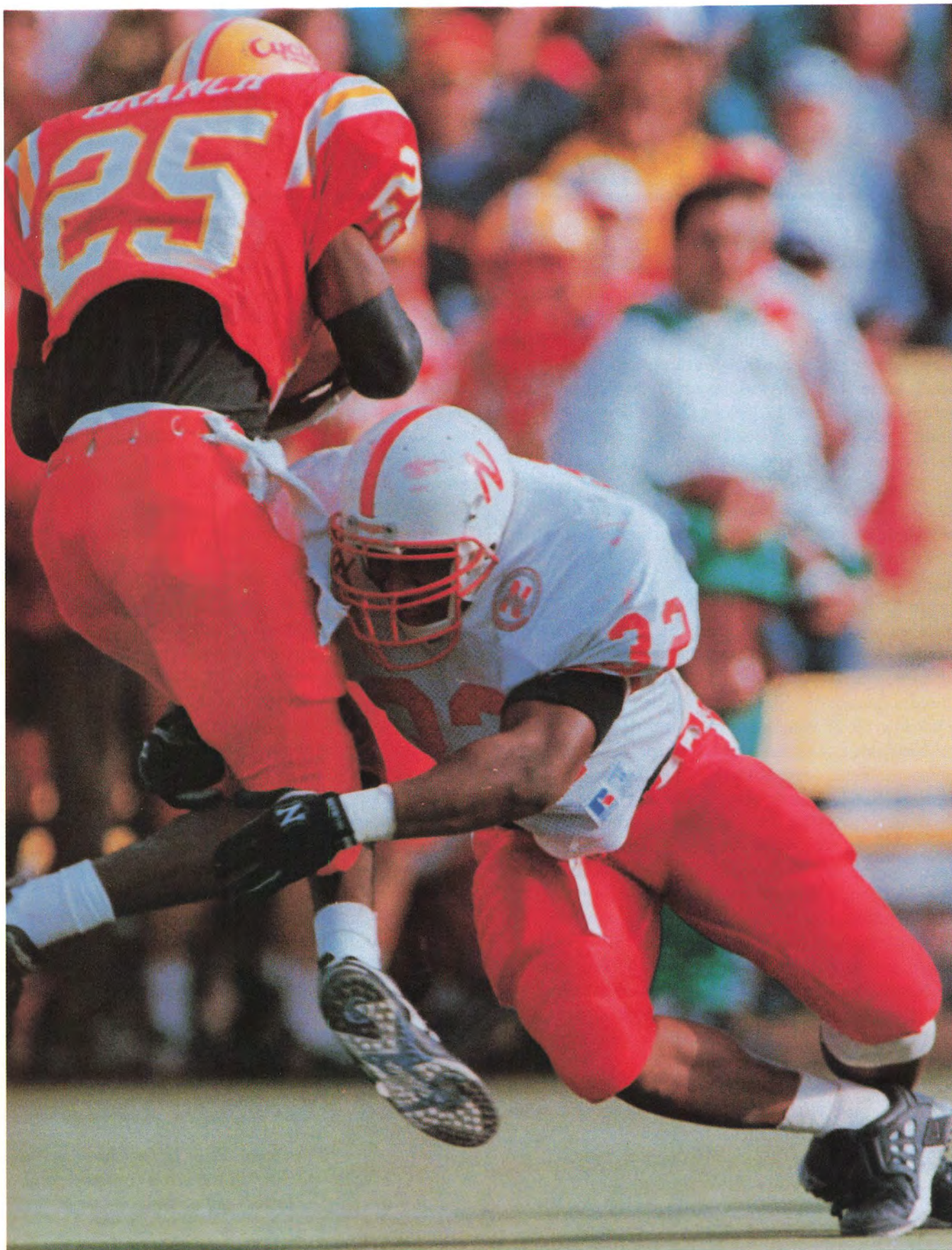
The Huskers scored 38 points by the half Saturday. But then, under Osborne rules, they have to campaign quickly.

"That's the main thing on your mind — score every time you're in there," right guard Brenden Stai said. "But when you run up the score to prove something to the nation, I don't get a big kick out of that. What can you do?

"Coach Osborne is a conservative coach. He doesn't like wiping people's faces in a loss."

Paid for by Nebraska for No. 1.





RICH JANDA

Ed Stewart upends Iowa State's Calvin Branch. Stewart led the Huskers with 11 tackles, including two for losses. He also led the Huskers on the season with 96 stops.



<b>NEBRASKA</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>IOWA ST.</b>	<b>12</b>

N o v e m b e r 1 2 , 1 9 9 4

# NOT THIS YEAR

*TWO LATE SCORES VS. CYCLONES HELP HUSKERS  
AVOID REPEAT OF '92 LOSS*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**AMES, IOWA** — One team entered Cyclone Stadium without a win. The other came in without a loss.

But deep into top-ranked Nebraska's 28-12 victory over Iowa State, it wasn't always clear which team was which.

The Cyclones (0-9-1 overall, 0-5-1 in the Big Eight) closed to within one point late in the second quarter, were within two points entering the fourth quarter and saw a touchdown called back with nine minutes left before succumbing in front of 45,186 fans.

"I told our players this morning that we would have to go four quarters," Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne said, "and that Iowa State would play as well as they possibly could."

Did the Huskers believe him?

"Sure," cornerback Barron Miles said. "Especially since they upset us over here two years ago. Why wouldn't Iowa State think it could do it again?"

That was exactly what the Cyclones said they were thinking. They wanted to repeat the 19-10 decision over Nebraska that was the shocker of the 1992 season.

"Our guys love to play Nebraska," said ISU Co-Defensive Coordinator Jimmy Burrow, who played at NU 20 years ago. "It's the darnedest thing I've ever seen."

"You wouldn't think that would be a normal reaction. But they couldn't wait to play this game."

Eight players from the state of Nebraska started for Iowa State. Linebacker Matt Nitchie of Lincoln



BILL BATSON

**Cory Schlesinger clears the way for Lawrence Phillips. Phillips had just 63 yards in 27 carries after three quarters. But in the final nine minutes he ran nine times for 120 yards.**

CHAMPIONS





RICH JANDA

Ed Stewart tackles Iowa State's Rodney Guggenheim in the second quarter. The Cyclones' bid to repeat their 1992 upset failed because they couldn't sustain drives: They finished with 213 total yards, and their option attack netted just 62 rushing yards. Quarterback Todd Doxzon gained 4 yards in 20 carries.

Southeast had 18 tackles. Linebacker Michael Cooper of Omaha Westside had 12. Place-kicker Ty Stewart of Westside kicked first-half field goals of 35 and 37 yards into a 20-mph wind.

And then there was quarterback Todd Doxzon of Millard North. He threw for 151 yards, including a 58-yard touchdown to Calvin Branch that cut Nebraska's lead to 14-12 with 3:42 left in the third quarter.

NU Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride said the Cyclones have a lot of players from Nebraska who wanted to upset the Huskers.

"Those guys have a lot of pride and are good players," McBride said. "And Jim Walden really had them cranked."

Walden, Iowa State's eight-year head coach, was making his final appearance with the Cyclones. He resigned under pressure last week, then learned Thursday that he has been suspended from the season finale at Colorado for criticizing officials.

"I figured we would see a very emotional situation," Osborne said. "They gave us a great ballgame. This was their bowl game."

"But we never lost our poise. You could panic. But I don't think anybody ever did."

NEBRASKA	7	7	0	14—28
At Iowa State	3	3	6	0—12

N—LAWRENCE PHILLIPS 1 RUN (TOM SIELER KICK)

IS—FG TY STEWART 35

IS—FG STEWART 37

N—ABDUL MUHAMMAD 38 PASS FROM BROOK BERRINGER (SIELER KICK)

IS—CALVIN BRANCH 58 PASS FROM TODD DOXZON (RUN FAILED)

N—DAMON BENNING 6 RUN (SIELER KICK)

N—PHILLIPS 21 RUN (SIELER KICK)

	N	IS
FIRST DOWNS	21	11
RUSHES-YARDS	56-285	43-62
PASSING YARDS	193	151
TOTAL YARDS	478	213
RETURN YARDS	7	3
PASSES	11-18-1	8-13-0
PUNTS	5-41.6	8-45.1
FUMBLES-LOST	2-1	1-0
PENALTIES-YARDS	5-55	5-50

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—N, PHILLIPS 36-183, BERRINGER 9-61, SCHLESINGER 7-24, CHILDS 2-9, BENNING 1-6, MAKOVICKA 1-2. IS, GUGGENHEIM 6-32, DAVIS 4-10, KNOTT 3-8, GARRIS 6-7, DOXZON 20-4, TURNER 1-2, BRANCH 3-MINUS 1.

PASSING—N, BERRINGER 11-18-1 193. IS, DOXZON 8-13-0 151.

RECEIVING—N, PHILLIPS 4-40, BAUL 3-49, MUHAMMAD 2-52, GILMAN 1-48, ALFORD 1-4. IS, TURNER 3-31, BRANCH 2-63, MHOON 2-20, HORACEK 1-37.





Tom Shatel...

## PROUD END FOR WALDEN

AMES, IOWA, NOV. 12 — Nebraska tried to give Jim Walden a going-away present on Saturday.

The top-ranked Huskers offered up three turnovers, led 14-12 going into the fourth quarter and looked generally lethargic before pulling away to a 28-12 victory at Jack Trice Field.

But on Jim Walden's fields, the Cyclones always were known more for giving than receiving such tokens, which is why Walden walked off a college sideline for perhaps the last time late Saturday.

That the score could have been closer or padded more to suit Nebraska's ranking was not the issue. That Walden also may have gone out costing the Huskers the No. 1 ranking for this week also seemed of little consequence as the sun set on a man's head coaching career.

What mattered most was the consolation prize that every coach should stuff into his last duffel bag.

"I'm proud of the way we played against a really good football team," Walden said. "I wish (Nebraska) the best. I'm very proud of the way our guys played."

In the end, it was a proud moment for him, too. He stood at the podium of his postgame press conference, drained and holding a diet Coke can.

He said he was tired. He looked it. Too tired to complain about officiating. Too tired to throw one last dart at the Big Eight Conference office, which suspended him for the season finale at Colorado for throwing one too many darts at officials.

Too proud.

And this game did not come down to a blatant call or bad break anyway. Walden could point to one play — a touchdown pass nullified by a holding penalty with 9:40 to go with NU leading 21-12. But why use his needle to deflate a great effort?

"Whether it was right or wrong, I don't know," Walden said. "But it hurt. We were running out of energy. When you run out of energy against that team, they run over you."

But the Big Red machine didn't bowl over the Cyclones as designed. Nebraska struggled. Or Iowa State rose up one last time. Take your pick.

Either way, it was a most appropriate way for

Walden to take a bow. None of the incessant whining about facilities or scholarships or bad calls that had marred his tenure. Instead, Walden went out the way everyone thought his tenure would be: taking a giant to the mat and scaring the bejeebies out of him.

"I didn't sleep much last night," Nebraska Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride said. "Wondering what they were going to do."

But there were no tricks-or-treats waiting for the Huskers. No onside kicks or flea-flickers. The Cyclones hung in, straight-up. In more than one corner of Cyclone Stadium, there were visions of 1992 dancing in imaginations.

"Our plan was to try to make it close into the fourth quarter," Walden said. "That may have been rambunctious thinking."

It didn't happen — because this Nebraska team is stronger, deeper and more mature than the 1992 team that walked off this field in shocked defeat. No Marv Seilers running down the field this time.

If not for a fumble call on Lawrence Phillips late in the game, it might have been 35-12. That margin no doubt would have suited voters in both the news media's and the coaches' polls today. With Penn State dramatically coming from behind at Illinois, the Huskers probably will pay for three quarters of sloppy football.

You figured the nation's top rushing team would have put up a 500-spot against one of the worst rushing defenses in the country. But it was all it could do to struggle to 285 yards.

Nobody's perfect every week. But in the fickle world of college football rankings, you have to be perfect or dominant or both. Nebraska was not close to either on Saturday.

"They were taking a lot of chances on defense, and they got lucky a few times and slanted into the play," right tackle Zach Wiegert said. "It's not that we didn't show up today. They played well. Give them credit."

Give Walden credit.

"I feel for him," said senior ISU place-kicker Ty Stewart of Omaha. "He got a raw deal from the Big Eight. I think that was uncalled for."



Perhaps, though, the one-game suspension may serve Walden well. Instead of ending it beneath a Rocky Mountain avalanche next Saturday, his last game will be remembered for a valiant effort before a near-sellout crowd, including many fans from Nebraska, a place that gave him so many fond memories as a member of Bob Devaney's national championship staffs.

"Today points out one thing to Cyclone fans," Walden said. "Players play hard when there is a loud crowd. I hope we can leave that legacy. I don't care if it took 5,000 Nebraska fans to get 30- or 40,000 Iowa State fans to get going.

"But that should show Iowa State fans what they have to do. Wake up! Get up! Don't come here and be asleep. They've been asleep since I got here. Look at the crowd today and try to do whatever you did today. Help the next coach. Help the next team."

Help is supposedly on the way, though a construc-

tion trailer located behind the north end zone has been dormant for months. Still, the promise of better facilities and lenient academic standards — hollow or not — will lure the next coach. It had better be a promise kept, lest Iowa State never see the light of day beneath the Big 12 Conference pile.

Whether the Cyclones do or don't is no longer Walden's problem. But he won't get a chance to work with new aid. He'll be remembered instead for taking over a program devastated by probation and, except for the occasional upset, underachieving.

At least Saturday should help ease his mind and legacy.

"When I walked off I was thinking about how well the kids played," he said. "And how it was when I was on the other sideline, next to Tom. I was a great coach then. Maybe I should have stayed there."

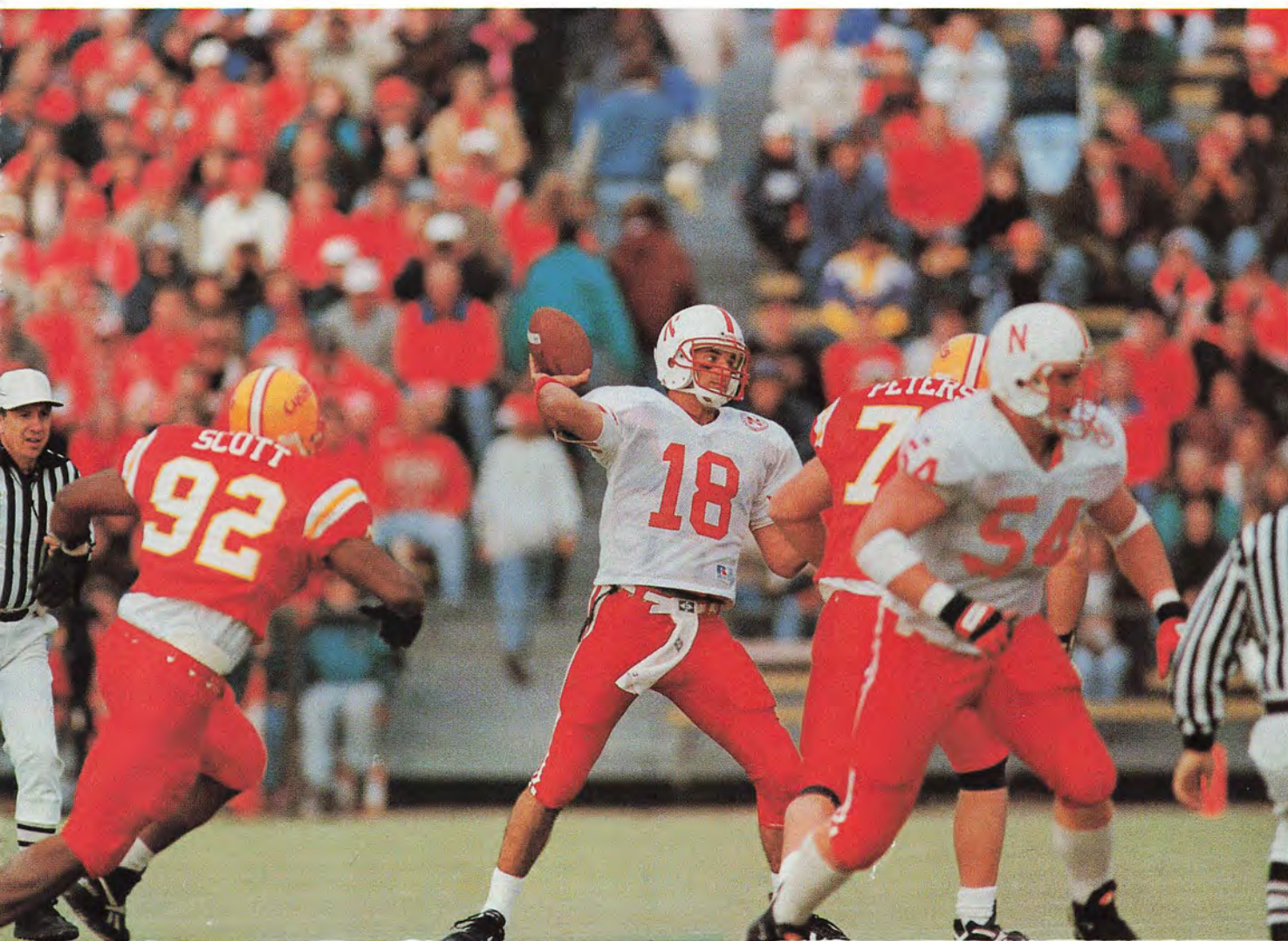
But even Walden knew this was no time for regrets. Or future plans.



BILL BATSON

Reggie Baul caught three passes for 49 yards against Iowa State. He finished the season with 17 catches, third on the team behind Abdul Muhammad and Lawrence Phillips, and averaged 17.7 yards a catch.





RICH JANDA

Brook Berringer completed 11 of 18 passes for 193 yards against Iowa State. It was his second-best passing game of the season.

"It may be next March or next fall when I realize I'm not doing this anymore," he said. "But I'm tired. I'm not thinking about whether I will come back and coach again. This was an emotional roller coaster this year. It was a good feeling today, seeing the spirit of

Nebraskans pick our people up.

"It was a good run. I didn't win as many games as I wanted. But what coach ever does?"

Nebraska was another one that got away Saturday. But for once, Walden wasn't complaining.





Kareem Moss hogties Oklahoma running back Jerald Moore. Moore gained 71 yards in 15 carries, but the Sooners netted just 179 total. Only 47 came after halftime. "I'm real proud of our defense," NU Coach Tom Osborne said. "I thought they really carried the day."





NEBRASKA	13
OKLAHOMA	3

N o v e m b e r 2 5 , 1 9 9 4

# It's WORTH REPEATING: 12-0

## *NU CLAIMS FOURTH STRAIGHT CROWN BY THROTTLING OU*

BY LEE BARFKNECHT

**NORMAN, OKLA.** — After sweating out a 13-3 victory over Oklahoma, players from top-ranked Nebraska played it cool.

No whooping over winning the Big Eight title outright with a 7-0 record.

No hollering over earning the league's automatic bid to the Orange Bowl.

No celebrating a second straight undefeated regular season and just the fourth 12-win season in school history.

"It's not time to cut loose yet," strongside line-backer Troy Dumas said. "All the work we've been doing has been toward one goal — the national championship."

Offensive tackle Zach Wiegert agreed.

"Sure, we're happy to be Big Eight champions," he said after accepting congratulations from Orange Bowl President Ed Williamson. "But this is our fourth Big Eight championship in a row. We're looking for more."

Nebraska stayed in contention to play for more by relying on a defense that held Oklahoma to a season-

JEFF BUNDY

CHAMPIONS





Abdul Muhammad outruns Oklahoma safety Rod Henderson for a 44-yard gain on a third-and-10 play early in the fourth quarter, which set up Nebraska's only touchdown. Muhammad finished with five catches for 98 yards, making key plays on each NU scoring drive.





BILL BATSON

NEBRASKA 0 3 3 7—13  
At OKLAHOMA 0 3 0 0—3

N—FG DARIN ERSTAD 46  
O—FG SCOTT BLANTON 25  
N—FG TOM SIELER 26  
N—BROOK BERRINGER 1 RUN (SIELER KICK)

	N	O
FIRST DOWNS	18	10
RUSHES-YARDS	50-136	32-108
PASSING YARDS	166	71
TOTAL YARDS	302	179
RETURN YARDS	12	29
PASSES	13-23-1	6-18-2
PUNTS	5-47	7-38
FUMBLES-LOST	2-0	0-0
PENALTIES-YARDS	4-28	5-35

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

**RUSHING**—N, PHILLIPS 21-50, BERRINGER 15-48, SCHLESINGER 3-11, BENNING 3-10, TURMAN 1-9, MAKOVICKA 3-9, CHILDS 3-6, MUHAMMAD 1-MINUS 7. O, MOORE 15-71, MCGEE 5-20, CHANDLER 3-9, ALLEN 9-8.

**PASSING**—N, BERRINGER 13-23-1 166. O, MCGEE 6-17-2 71, HALL 0-1-0 0.

**RECEIVING**—N, MUHAMMAD 5-98, PHILLIPS 3-24, GILMAN 2-23, ALFORD 2-16, BAUL 1-5. O, HALL 3-51, MCDANIEL 2-11, ALLEN 1-9.

low 179 total yards — 47 in the second half — and an offense that scratched out 10 points in the second half to break a 3-3 tie.

It was the fifth time in seven Big Eight games that the Blackshirts limited an opponent to seven points or less.

"I'm real proud of our defense," NU Coach Tom Osborne said. "I thought they really carried the day."

The Blackshirts' work was vital to keeping national title hopes alive, because the Nebraska offense had problems carrying its share of the load in front of 70,216 fans at Owen Field.

The Huskers, who lost 10 yards rushing in the second quarter, finished with 136 on the ground. That was the lowest total since OU held them to 122 last year and was 222 under their national-best average.

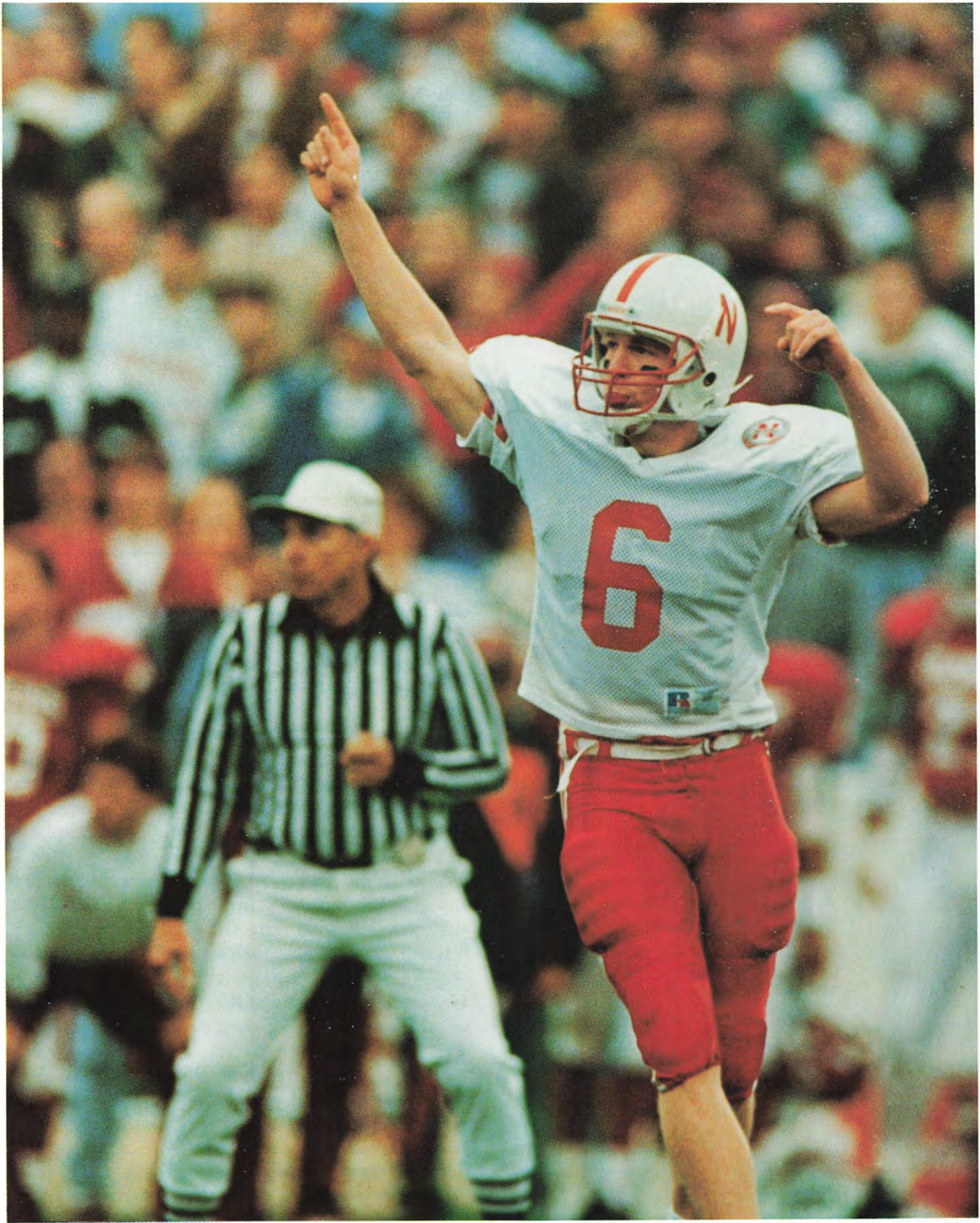
The offensive line, with two first-team All-Americans in Wiegert and Brenden Stai, allowed three sacks. That group had given up only four sacks in the previous 11 games.

And I-back Lawrence Phillips saw his streak of consecutive 100-yard games snapped at 11 as he was held to 50 yards on 21 carries. He ends the season with 1,722 yards, the No. 2 total in NU history behind Heisman Trophy-winner Mike Rozier's 2,148 in 1983.

"We felt coming in that the strong part of Oklahoma's team was their defense," Osborne said. "We were worried about moving the ball because their tackles and inside linebackers were outstanding.

"We didn't miss our prediction by much."





JEFF BEIERMANN

Darin Erstad watches his 46-yard field goal sail through the uprights to put the Huskers up 3-0 in the second quarter. Erstad was 2 for 6 on the season on field goals of 40 yards or longer. He also converted a 48-yarder.





Tom Shatel...

## QB QUESTION FINALLY ARISES

**NORMAN, OKLA., NOV. 25** — Give us credit. At least we waited until Brook Berringer had his helmet off before we asked.

"Who will play quarterback in the Orange Bowl?"

"I would think they would stick with me, but you never know," Berringer said. "I don't want to get into that too much."

Too late. Pandora's Box has been opened. For the next month, the specter of quarterback Tommie Frazier's return will hang over No. 1 (for now) Nebraska. Brook or Tommie, Tommie or Brook. And you thought the political debates were over?

In a 13-3 Nebraska victory over Oklahoma that was uglier than the score indicated, Berringer had his worst game of seven starts since taking over for Frazier. The only thing worse was his timing.

While the Nebraska offense coughed and wheezed under Berringer, there on the sidelines loomed Frazier, in uniform and cleared to play by his doctors for the first time since his "season-ending" blood clot. What happened to three months on blood thinners?

That Frazier was dressed in a white No. 17 was a testimony to the wonders of modern medicine and perhaps some good fortune smiling down on Tom Osborne. Frazier will return to a blood thinner this weekend, but he also will return for the Orange Bowl, where Osborne said, "He will be able to play."

Did somebody say something about a quarterback controversy in the spring?

"I looked at Tommie a few times today," Osborne said, fanning the flames before adding, "It wasn't Brook's problem today. He did a good job."

Berringer was simply functional, because he won. But Berringer lacked the sharpness and the play-making ability of his first six starts. And one could only speculate that there was a direct correlation to seeing Frazier in the on-deck circle.

"When I heard he was able to play, I just put it out of my mind," Berringer said. "I'm not going to worry about it. (But) I would have been surprised to see him in there because of our chemistry."

That offensive chemistry on Friday smelled like

sulfur. Nebraska's offense was, in a word, horrible. Despite having the ball for 36 minutes, the Husker rushing machine was held to a season-low 136 yards.

NU's 308 total yards were second-lowest only to the Kansas State game (262 total yards), in which the Huskers started walk-on Matt Turman. There was no such excuse on Friday.

"I'll take the credit for most of it," Berringer said. "But there were a lot of factors."

Start with the offensive line getting stuffed and a most curious game plan for a rushing giant. Senior left tackle Rob Zatechka said the Huskers' plan, in deference to the Oklahoma defense, was to open up the passing game first to set up the run. It meant a lot of long-yardage situations and no rhythm for the running game or I-back Lawrence Phillips (21 carries, 50 yards), who had eight carries at the half.

Berringer shouldn't take the blame. He has functioned well in the cocoon of dominant line play and brilliant play-calling. But with that 1-2 punch absent on Friday, it's doubtful No. 17 could have done better.

Afterwards, the Huskers were working overtime to credit OU's defense. While there was some truth to that, there was also the reminder that possible Orange Bowl opponent Miami's defense would be more formidable. If this Husker offense shows up in Miami, you can forget the national title. You can't win if you can't score.

But what if Frazier plays?

Osborne unintentionally opened the debate by suiting up Frazier, and the Husker offense simply added to the bonfire. Whether it could prove a giant distraction is unclear. But late Friday, it had already begun.

"Off the cuff, I think you'd go with Brook, because he's gotten us here since the Wyoming game," Zatechka said. "I'd like to say it would give us a psychological edge, knowing we have both if we need them."

Then again, if they bring this lemon again, it won't matter who's driving.





JEFF BEIERMAN

Guard Joel Wilks gets a hug from his father, Jerry Wilks of Lincoln. The record Orange Bowl crowd of 81,753 included an estimated 20,000 Husker fans.



# NEBRASKA BY THE NUMBERS

## REGULAR-SEASON RESULTS

RECORD: 12-0

NU 31	.....West Virginia 0
NU 42	.....Texas Tech 16
NU 49	.....UCLA 21
NU 70	.....Pacific 21
NU 42	.....Wyoming 32
NU 32	.....Oklahoma State 3
NU 17	.....Kansas State 6
NU 42	.....Missouri 7
NU 24	.....Colorado 7
NU 45	.....Kansas 17
NU 28	.....Iowa State 12
NU 13	.....Oklahoma 3

## TEAM

	NU	Opp.
Time of possession	6:43:8	5:16:52
First downs	293	176
By rushing	215	68
By passing	66	89
By penalty	12	19
Avg. per game	24.4	14.7
3rd-down conv.	74-164	50-174
3rd-down pct.	.451	.287
Total yards	5,734	3,106
Avg. per game	477.8	258.8
Total plays	897	765
Avg. per game	74.8	63.8
Avg. yds. per play	6.4	4.1
Yards rushing	4,080	951
Avg. per game	340.0	79.3
Rushing attempts	687	401
Avg. per rush	5.9	2.4
Pass att.	210	364
Completions	120	172
Percentage	.571	.473
Yards passing	1,654	2,155
Avg. per game	137.8	179.6
Avg. per attempt	7.9	5.9
Avg. per comp.	13.8	12.5
QB sacks by	43	6
Interceptions by	17	7
Avg. return yds	12.8	4.9
Punts-avg.	50-42.6	88-41.4
Punt ret.-avg.	49-8.6	24-2.9
Kickoffs ret.-avg.	25-22.8	35-18.2
Penalties-yds.	76-670	60-475
Avg. per game	6.3-55.8	5.0-39.6
Fumbles-lost	27-13	18-4
Points scored	435	145
Avg. per game	36.3	12.1

## RUSHING

	Att.	Net	Avg.	TDs	LG
Phillips	286	1,722	6.0	16	74
Schlesinger	63	456	7.2	4	41
Childs	62	395	6.4	5	30
Benning	67	367	5.5	5	23
Makovicka	47	321	6.8	2	50
Berringer	71	279	3.9	6	28
Frazier	33	248	7.5	6	58
Schuster	13	98	7.5	0	33
Turman	19	80	4.2	0	24
Muhammad	5	32	6.4	0	30
Uhlir	6	27	4.5	0	10
Davenport	4	25	6.3	0	12
Alford	1	17	17.0	0	17
Jackson	3	12	4.0	0	8
Norris	2	7	3.5	0	5
Washington	1	5	5.0	0	5
Kucera	1	4	4.0	0	4
Stanley	1	0	0.0	0	0
Held	1	0	0.0	0	0

## PASSING

	C-A-I	Yds.	TDs	Rank
Berringer	94-151-5	1,295	10	149.5
Frazier	19-44-2	273	4	116.2
Turman	6-12-0	81	1	134.2
Vedral	1-1-0	5	0	142.0
Phillips	0-1-0	0	0	0.0
Kucera	0-1-0	0	0	0.0

## PASS RECEIVING

	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	TDs	LG
Muhammad	23	360	15.7	2	44
Phillips	22	172	7.8	0	27
Baul	17	300	17.7	3	51
Gilman	17	196	11.5	1	48
Alford	14	271	19.4	4	46
Holbein	9	88	9.8	2	30
Benning	5	68	13.6	0	37
Childs	5	58	11.6	0	26
Johnson	4	93	23.3	2	64
Makovicka	1	5	5.0	0	5
Lake	1	24	24.0	1	24
Carpenter	1	12	12.0	0	12
Vedral	1	7	7.0	0	7

## KICKOFF RETURNS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TDs	LP
Benning	12	308	25.7	0	58
Childs	9	190	21.1	0	34
Uhlir	1	30	30.0	0	30
Williams	1	17	17.0	0	17
Schlesinger	1	16	16.0	0	16
Makovicka	1	10	10.0	0	10

## PUNT RETURNS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TDs	LP
Moss	31	234	7.6	0	28
Baul	11	119	10.8	0	22
Williams	4	42	10.5	0	18
Miles	1	21	21.0	0	21
Childs	1	3	3.0	0	3
Wrice	1	0	0.0	0	0

## INTERCEPTIONS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TDs	LP
Miles	5	35	7.0	0	27
Veland	3	35	11.7	0	35
Williams	3	34	11.3	0	28
Moss	2	0	0.0	0	0
Dumas	1	54	54.0	0	54
Dennis	1	48	48.0	0	48
Collins	1	8	8.0	0	8
Brown	1	4	4.0	0	4

## PUNTS

	No.	Avg.	Blk.	LG
Erstad	50	42.	6	73

## FIELD GOALS

	19-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Yds.	2-2	2-4	0-0	0-0
Sieler	1-1	0-1	2-6	0-0
Erstad	3-3	2-5	2-6	0-0
NU	2-2	2-4	3-5	0-0
Opponents				

## SCORING

	TD	PAT	FG	TP
Phillips	16	0	0	96
Sieler	0	40	4	52
Frazier	6	2	0	40
Berringer	6	0	0	36
Benning	5	0	0	30
Childs	5	0	0	30
Alford	4	1	0	26
Schlesinger	4	0	0	24
Erstad	0	11	3	21
Baul	3	0	0	18
Holbein	2	0	0	12
Makovicka	2	0	0	12
Muhammad	2	0	0	12
Johnson	2	0	0	12
Gilman	1	0	0	6
Lake	1	0	0	6
Retzlaff	0	2	0	2

## SCORE BY QUARTER

NU	95	136	103	101-435
Opponents	23	36	43	43-145

## TACKLES

	UT	AT	TT	Sack
Stewart	41	55	96	3[12]
C. Peter	32	39	71	7
Dumas	38	31	69	1
Moss	41	25	66	2
Ellis	24	34	58	[12]
Jones	23	29	52	5
Colman	17	34	51	2
Harris	15	28	43	[12]
Connealy	13	29	42	[12]
Miles	24	16	40	0
T. Williams	31	7	38	0
Stokes	12	24	36	0
Wistrom	14	22	36	4[12]
Veland	13	13	26	0
Tomich	12	11	23	1
Terwilliger	8	11	19	2
Brown	8	10	18	0
Dennis	9	7	16	0
Pesterfield	9	6	15	3
McFarlin	6	9	15	0
Vedral	6	5	11	0
Hesse	5	6	11	0
Dar. Schmadeke	8	1	9	0
Penland	2	7	9	0
Hardin	4	5	9	0
Alexander	2	6	8	0
Saltsman	2	6	8	0
J. Peter	2	6	8	0
Minter	3	4	7	0
Townsend	2	4	6	0
J. Williams	5	1	6	0
Noster	3	2	5	0
Wrice	2	3	5	0
Arnold	1	3	4	0
Benning	1	3	4	0
Erstad	2	2	4	0
Higman	1	3	4	0
Aden	1	3	4	0
Booker	2	2	4	0
Makovicka	1	2	3	0
Childs	1	2	3	0
Ogard	1	2	3	0
Collins	0	2	2	0
Jenkins	0	2	2	0
Sokolosky	0	2	2	0
Morrow	0	2	2	0
Retzlaff	2	0	2	0
Pruitt	2	0	2	0
Popplewell	1	0	1	0
Sieler	0	1	1	0
Muhammad	1	0	1	0
Blahak	1	0	1	0
Schlesinger	1	0	1	0
Winder	0	1	1	0
Gard	0	1	1	0
Schuster	0	1	1	0

Tackles for losses and yards lost—C. Peter 14-45, Jones 10-52, Harris 10-48, Connealy 7[12]-38, Ellis 7[12]-21, Wistrom 6[12]-55, Stewart 5[12]-23, Pesterfield 5-33, Dumas 4-17, Tomich 4-15, Colman 3-16, Terwilliger 3-14, Moss 3-13, Hesse 2-2, J. Peter 1-3, Townsend 1-3, Brown 1-1, Saltsman 1-1, Minter 1-1, Ogard 1-1.

Fumble recoveries—C. Peter 1, Colman 1, Brown 1, Benning 1.

Passes broken up—Miles 13, T. Williams 5, Moss 4, Harris 4, Dennis 3, C. Peter 2, Jones 2, Stokes 2, J. Peter 2, Stewart 1, Colman 1, Veland 1, Pesterfield 1, McFarlin 1, Dar. Schmadeke 1, Minter 1, Collins 1, Blahak 1.

CHAMPIONS





JIM BURNETT

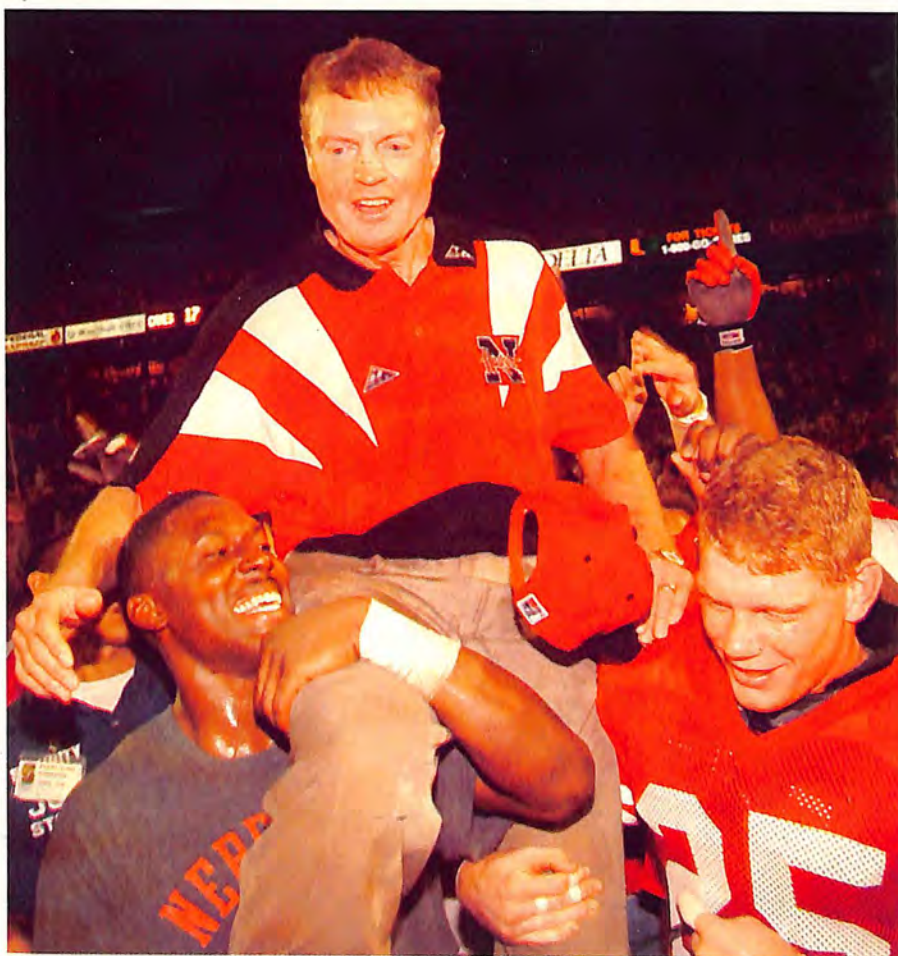
Memorial Stadium during the Oct. 29 sellout game against Colorado. *Sports Illustrated* labeled Nebraska fans the "best fans in college football."







## Huskers Win Miami Thriller AT LAST!



VICTORY RIDE: Nebraska kick holder Jon Vedal, No. 25, and another Husker player carry Coach Tom Osborne after the victory over Miami that is expected to give the coach his first national title.

## Fans Savor End to Bowl Frustrations Nebraska Stakes Claim to National Title

BY CHRIS BURBACH  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Miami — This time it was different. Nothing — not the Miami Hurricanes, not their home crowd, not the ghosts of almost that once haunted Nebraska in the Orange Bowl stadium — could stop the Cornhuskers Sunday night.

Nebraska's 24-17 victory over Miami in the FedEx Orange Bowl gave the Huskers a 13-0 season and probably gave Coach Tom Osborne his first national championship.

Nebraska came into the game rated No. 1 and most likely will stay there

when final rankings are made public Tuesday.

After the game, Osborne gestured to the Orange Bowl championship trophy on a table near him.

"I didn't know this even existed," he said, joking.

The comeback win came on touchdowns in the Orange Bowl stadium's east end zone, where two other Nebraska chances at being No. 1 had died. After two Cory Schlesinger touchdowns

in the fourth quarter, Nebraska stuffed Miami's last drive — and the whole state celebrated.

For once, that state wasn't Florida.

"What a game! What a game! What a game!" Husker fan Marlene Terwilliger screamed as she left the stadium.

Isiah Jackson Jr., an Omaha police officer, danced in an aisle at the stadium. All around him a popcorn-waving, high-five-smacking, "We're No. 1!" chanting crowd was just beginning a wild celebra-

tion.

"This feels good," Jackson said. "This feels so good."

Despite seven straight bowl losses — five of them to Florida teams — Nebraska players and fans came to Miami feeling confident.

"We're not going to let it come down to a field goal," Schlesinger had said before the game.

Nebraska fans showed their confidence in numbers. They filled one

corner of the Hurricanes' home stadium.

Back home in Omaha, thousands of people came outside in a temperature of 10 degrees within minutes of the game's end.

Fireworks broke out in west side neighborhoods.

People came out of their houses to shout encouragement to each other.

Cars rolled along West Dodge Road and Dodge Street with celebrating fans

hanging out the windows extending their index fingers up and yelling to each other.

Some Nebraska fans went to some lengths to see the game on television. Bill Streeter, who drives a shuttle bus for a rental car service near Eppley Airfield, booked up a portable color television next to him in his bus to catch the game on television.

"I won't watch it while I'm driving," Streeter said. "I'll just watch it when I'm sitting here."

World-Herald staff writer C.J. Hutchinson contributed to this report.

### Orange Bowl Inside

RUN: Nebraska makes its run for the national title by sticking with the run. Sports, Page 13.

OSBORNE: Tom Osborne, always the fisherman, pulls out the catch of his life in the Orange Bowl. Sports, Page 13.

SCHLESINGER: Cory Schlesinger scores twice in the final seven minutes, 38 seconds. Sports, Page 13.

## Celebrations Spill Into Nebraska Streets

BY PAUL HAMMILL  
and C.J. HUTCHINSON  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITERS

Seven years of bowl-game frustration exploded into a spontaneous celebration in Nebraska after the Cornhuskers' 24-17 victory over Miami in the FedEx Orange Bowl.

In Lincoln, fireworks streaked into the sky. In Omaha, O Street, the city's

main thoroughfare, honking victory salutes. And a crowd of about 600 people blocked the four-lane street downtown for a raucous, impromptu midnight pep rally.

The scene was much the same in Omaha, where police estimated that more than 3,000 people jammed the intersection of 72nd and Dodge Streets.

A man in red blazer underwear and shoes — and that was all — ran toward

the middle of the intersection waving a red flag with an N on it.

Traffic came to a standstill as people collected as though drawn by a magnet.

A Big Red mania magnet.

"This is insane," shouted T.J. Burbridge, as his daughter Megan, 6, balanced on his shoulders. "It's unbelievable!"

About 20 people gathered at the intersection shortly after the game

ended, at about 11:10 p.m. Steadily and quickly, people were drawn to the area until at 12:15 a.m. a police officer estimated there were 3,000.

Mona Snyder, 26, was among the first in the area, waving and yelling. What about the 10-degree temperature?

"Who cares," she said. "This is worth it."

Police cruisers arrived at the scene

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### Huskers Arrival

The Nebraska football team's chartered flight is to leave Miami at 11 EST this morning and land at Lincoln Municipal Airport at 1 CST this afternoon. The team, which is poised to win the national championship in Tuesday's game, is going straight to the Bob Devaney Sports Center for a pep rally. The public can attend free on a first-come, first-served basis.

